BUDDHISM

PRIMITIVE AND PRESENT

IN MAGADHA AND IN CEYLON

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PREFACE

The scope of this work is limited to the history and description of that particular stock or branch of Buddhism which has been established and continued in Ceylon.

I have tried to treat this subject in a way at once popular enough to interest the general reader, and accurate enough to be of value to the scholar. With a view to the former purpose I have avoided as far as possible the use, in the text, of Pali words and technical terms: with a view to the latter purpose, I have given references for every statement which professes to be drawn direct from the Pali books.

The notes which stand at the end of some chapters, the chapter (xxi.) on the Literary History of the Texts, and the Appendix on Sirivaddhanapura, may, I hope, be found contributions to scholarship or history. In the interest of all readers, I have suppressed, as a rule, the marks of quantity and the diacritical points in proper names, after the first occurrence of each.

The reader who wishes to refresh his memory as to the pronunciation of a name can find it in the Index.

Originality, or at any rate independence, I do not disclaim. My statements and opinions are not derived at second-hand from translations or manuals. I have read a large part of the original 'sacred books' of which I speak,—almost all that has been published and a good deal that has not,—and I have had access to competent Sinhalese authorities.

But while I claim to have been in this sense an independent student, I am glad to say I am not advancing strange or startling views, but adding, in most points, the slight weight of my confirmation to what has been written by those who have gone before me.

In regard to the history, the reader of this book will be invited to a conclusion midway between scepticism and credulity. Starting with a strong inclination to believe ancient records rather than to set them aside, I have been compelled to doubt whether we have evidence which can be called historical for the centuries before B.C. 260, and to assign to the era of Asoka an immense importance, as that in which

Buddhism and Buddhist literature took the shape in which we know them. At the same time, I see no reason to doubt that the literature which has come down to us contains material which was nearly or quite contemporary with Gotama, or that what it tells us of his life and work is, in its main features, true.

In regard to the contents of the sacred books and the moral value of their teaching, as well as in regard to the description of modern Buddhism in Ceylon, I have aimed at not merely an impartial but a generous treatment. Impartial, in a sense, it was impossible for me to be. The questions raised are not for me open questions: I start with immovable convictions about the main principles of truth and goodness. But heartily to welcome all that agreed with those principles, and favourably to interpret in their light all that was not opposed to them,—this is what I have desired to do. If I have blamed many things and pointed out many defects, I hope I have earned the right to do so by candid and ungrudging acknowledgment of much which I could praise.

Even in the defects and errors which distress him, the Christian often sees the traces of longings and instincts, exaggerated here or misdirected, yet im-

planted by that Heavenly Father, from Whom His children have been so far estranged; while in many a noble aspiration or passage of beauty and truth, he thankfully adores the teaching of that Divine Word, Who has ever been everywhere the Light of the World, and of that Holy Spirit Who has never ceased to move, with life-giving influence, over the chords of human thought.

It would be an affectation to attempt to enumerate all the writers from whom I have derived help; but I must make special acknowledgment of the obligation which I am under, as is every student of Pali, to Professor Max Müller and the translators of the *Sacred Books of the East;* to Professor Rhys Davids, and the editors of the Pali Text Society; to Dr. Hermann Oldenberg, the editor of the *Vinaya Pitaka;* and Dr. Fausböll, the editor of the *Játaka.* Most of these scholars are also authors of independent works, among which I owe most to those of Professor Rhys Davids and Professor Oldenberg.

The work of Charles Turnour and of Professor Childers deserves to be respectfully recalled to mind whenever Pali studies are spoken of, especially in Ceylon.

In the chapter on Asoka, I am under special obligation to the *Corpus Inscriptionum* of General Cunningham, and the *Inscriptions de Piyadasi* of M. E. Sénart.

Although I have aimed at exercising an independent judgment, I have been helped and influenced by the various manuals and treatises, such as those of the scholars above named, of Sir Monier Monier Williams and others. I have made great use of Mr. C. Vijesiṇhe's important translation of the Mahavansa, with its analysis of contents and chronological tables. My obligations to friends in Ceylon, both English and Sinhalese, for information verbally given, are both too numerous, and, from the nature of the case, too indefinite to be separately recorded.

The translations which occur in the following pages, I have borrowed, in a great many cases, from the *Sacred Books of the East* and other English versions. I have done this, not so much to save myself trouble, as to give my readers security. But whenever the source of a translation is not acknowledged, I am myself responsible for it. For all the more important among the passages which I have translated for myself, I had the advantage of reading them over, in proof, to the late lamented

D. A. de Silva Batuwantudávé, Pandit, a teacher for whom I had a high esteem. The help which he gave me in this—and he saved me from several mistakes —was among the latest acts of his life. He died in April (1892), and his remains were cremated with great pomp. He was a really learned scholar, and an upright man. He had been the teacher of generations of European students, and the author of valuable works.

The writings of one very important author, the learned Spence Hardy, I purposely avoided consulting during the preparation of this work, though I had read parts of them sixteen years ago. His information was to so great an extent derived from Sinhalese sources, and his studies were likely to have run so parallel to my own, that I thought there would be more value in comparing my results afterwards with his, than in using his help to attain them. Since this book has been in the press, I have read his *Eastern Monachism* and *Manual of Buddhism*, and have been astonished at the accuracy with which he obtained, through Sinhalese channels, the contents of the Pali texts and commentaries. The fact that he was able to do so shows how untrue it would be to say that the Sinhalese had altogether lost the know-

ledge of the Pali books before European scholars recovered it for them. I have not been led, by the perusal of Hardy's works, to alter anything that I had written; but I have become more convinced that I have given too small a place, in comparison with the Pitaka texts, to commentaries and later works. Under this conviction I have somewhat enlarged my twenty-fourth chapter, and still acknowledge that my treatment of that part of the subject is incomplete.

The conditions under which I have had to work —writing different parts at widely different times— have led to my repeating myself in several instances; but I have not always corrected this, because, though it is a blemish on an author's work, it is not altogether an injury to the reader. Besides these defects, of which I am aware, I cannot hope entirely to have escaped more serious errors; and I shall be grateful to any one who will point them out.

To Him, Who is alone the Way, the Truth, and the Life, I humbly commit what I have done.

COLOMBO, *July* 1892.

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CORRIGENDA.

P. 488, l. 3 from foot, *for* Pohat *read* Pohath
489, l. 18, *for* light *read* eight
,, l. 2 from foot, *add* (8 miles to the E.)
,, last line, *for* nearer *read* further
491, in A's of Index (thrice), *for* 'A *read* A'
492, *for* Bihav *read* Bihar ; *and for* Dipanikara *read* Dipankara

PART I

INTRODUCTORY

CHAPTER I

THE SUBJECT DEFINED

THE interest which the study of Buddhism has aroused of late years in Europe has not been unreasonable, though it has been supported, in too many cases, by very little information. The important literature in which this system is embodied, its earnest moral tone, and the immense numbers of those who have professed it, justly give it a strong claim on men's attention. It is a stupendous fact, which no thoughtful man can contemplate without emotion.

It will no longer be asserted, by any one who is well-informed, that Buddhism reckons at the present day more adherents than any other creed.[1] But once probably it was so, and for many centuries. While Greeks and Romans, Jews and Christians, were few in number, and before Islam had arisen, vast multitudes in India and in China and the surrounding countries professed to find refuge in the Buddha. It is very

[1] See Note A at the end of this chapter.

possible, therefore—and it is a startling thought—that more men and women have owned the Buddha than have owned, as yet, any other teacher.

Truth is not measured—nor even is significance—by numbers. The small nation, for instance, of Jews, the little cities of Greece, and Rome while still she was confined to Italy, have made contributions to the development of mankind, compared with which the spiritual significance of the multitudes of India or of China is as nothing. But the spectacle of human multitudes is still an impressive and a moving spectacle, often a most pathetic one; and we cannot but ask, with deep interest, what is the nature of that teaching which has attracted so many of our fellow-men? What are the points kindred with truth, and with the Creator's purpose for man, which have given it a hold on so many hearts?

In such an inquiry we shall be much misled if we start, either with the assumption that what so many have believed must be true, or with the assumption that what has given it a hold on men is that by which it differs from other creeds. It is quite possible in regard to any system, and I think it will be found the case with this, that the elements of good and truth which it contains are not the elements peculiar to it—not its characteristics—but those elements which it shares with other systems.

The dogmas peculiar to Buddhism are the least true, and, I cannot but think, the least winning part of it. Something in its way of presenting some truths—

a few out of the many to which human nature everywhere responds—must be the secret of the attractive power which, once at least, it exercised. Which truths these are, and what is that way of presenting them, by which it gained access to the Indian heart, the reader of this book will be, I hope, in a position to judge for himself; so far at least as concerns the limited field over which I propose to conduct him.

For whereas the question is complicated by the great variety of shapes which Buddhism has taken, in the present work, out of all that variety, one clearly marked form is treated of alone. That form has strong claims to be considered the most genuine one; and so, I suppose, that in which what is of the essence of Buddhism can best be studied. I propose to describe the primitive stock and one of its existing branches; to show what Buddhism was in Magadha, the land of its origin, and what it is now in Ceylon. The Buddhism of Ceylon belongs to what is called the Ṣouthern School; and in treating of it we leave on one side not only the highly developed system of the Lamaism of Tibet, but also the less widely divergent branches which are found, for instance, in Nepaul, in China, and in Japan. Nor even of the Southern School do I undertake more than what concerns Ceylon. If the system has had a different development in Burma or in Siam, such differences lie outside my scope.

In this narrowness of scope there are, I think, advantages. If the vast extension of Buddhism has aroused

interest in it, the variety of its forms has been a prolific cause of confusion and mistake. Travellers and readers have been bewildered by statements apparently contradictory, made by authorities each of whom was speaking about a different thing. Towards the clearing up of these confusions a step has been taken, whenever a writer, though treating of Buddhism at large, has distinguished with adequate emphasis between the different systems which share that name. I hope even more to emphasise such distinction, by admitting nothing within the covers of my book that is not part of the description or the history of my particular branch.

From that point of view, in which the lover of his kind looks out with emotion upon the teeming myriads of his Buddhist brother men, the range of our present study is a very small one indeed. Out of the four or five hundred millions who are said to be, if not all Buddhists, yet all in some degree affected by Buddhism, the whole Southern group counts only thirty millions, while the Buddhists of Ceylon are less than two millions.

But to the student, to whom Buddhism is primarily a moral and philosophic system, the Ceylon branch of it, though small, is perhaps the best he could study, or at least the one to study first. For it is confessedly among those which have least diverged from the primitive stock, and it has a far longer continuous history than any other.

It is a historical method that we propose here to

follow. From the life, so far as we can ascertain it, of Gotama himself, we pass to a description of his system in the earliest form in which it has reached us, and thence to the events which have affected the Buddhist Community, first in India and then in Ceylon, period by period, to the present day.

But, before putting altogether out of sight the Northern School, it may be necessary briefly to explain why this can safely be done. The facts which justify it are these: that Buddhism passed from India to Ceylon before the characteristics of the Northern School had been developed; and that it remained in Ceylon substantially uninfluenced by that school. To disentangle the Ceylon line from the Northern, or rather to show that it was never entangled with it, will be the business of the next chapter.

NOTE A.—THE NUMBER OF BUDDHISTS.

It is not many years since even the name of Buddhism was unfamiliar, and its nature and extent unknown in Europe. And when first Europeans became vaguely aware of its importance and its vast extent, it is not surprising that there was a tendency to overstate a fact so startling. In many countries of the populous East, and especially in China, the temples of Buddhism and its professors are to be found. These countries were set down as Buddhist; and it was computed that the aggregate of their population amounted to a total exceeding that of the aggregate population of the countries known as Christian.

But this computation was misleading. In the vast areas, which in Asia are called by a single name by Europeans, there are many different elements of population and of custom. And in regard to China, uniform and homogeneous as it is in some respects, it is certainly not all one in the matter of religion. Yet if the reader

looks at any of the lists which show how the number of Buddhists in the world is made up, and observes the large part which is played, in making up the total, by the number assigned to China, he will see that the conclusion mainly depends on the question : Is China entirely Buddhist?[1]

In such lists, out of somewhat less than five hundred million 'Buddhists,' China contributes over four hundred millions. But in looking at such a list, and finding the whole of China reckoned as Buddhist, one necessarily asks, Where are the Confucianists and the Taoists? Is it a mistake to suppose that these are numerous in China? Or are they not religions? Or can the same man be both a Confucianist and a Buddhist?

To the question whether Confucianists are mumerous in China, the reply may be given in the words of Dr. Legge: 'Confucianism is the orthodoxy of China. . . . The mass of (the "Learned Class") and the masses under their influence are preponderatingly Confucian; and in the observance of ancestral worship . . . an overwhelming majority are regular and assiduous.'[2]

There is some truth in the explanation that is suggested by the question, Is Confucianism not a religion? It is thought by many not to be such in the fullest sense; to be rather a social and political than a spiritual system.[3] But it might be plausibly urged that Buddhism also is rather a philosophy than a religion; and if the comparison between the numbers of the various 'religions' is to be made at all, the term must be taken in its widest and conventional sense.

Can then a man be at once a Confucianist and a Buddhist? No doubt he can. Professor Max Müller says: 'It is very difficult to find out in China to what religion a man belongs, because the same person may profess two or even three religions.'[4] Dr. Edkin says: 'The mass of the people believe in them all.' 'It is not too much to say,' says Dr. Eitel, 'that most Chinese are theoretically

[1] This, however, was fully recognised by Professor M. Müller in his *Selected Essays*, vol. ii. 224 *seq.*; and by Professor Rhys Davids in his *Buddhism*, p. 4; where such lists are to be found.

[2] Legge's *Fá Hien*, Introd. p. 7. Elsewhere he speaks of Confucius as 'reigning supreme, the undisputed teacher of this most populous land.'

[3] But see the title of Confucianism to be called a religion defended by Dr. Legge, *Religions of China*, p. 5, etc.

[4] *l.c.* p. 226.

Confucianists, but essentially Buddhists or Taoists. But fairness requires us to add that, although the mass of the people are more or less influenced by Buddhist doctrines, yet the people as a whole have no respect for the Buddhist Church, and habitually sneer at Buddhist priests.'[1]

'In Japan,' writes a well-qualified observer, 'Buddhism is everywhere mixed up with Shintoism, and Buddhist temples and Shinto temples exist everywhere.' Nor is it easy in Ceylon to draw a line between Buddhism and Hinduism.

In short, while there are insincere professors in the pale of every religion, it is peculiarly difficult in the case of Buddhism to define its pale at all. Dr. Legge, after carefully stating the case, sums up thus: 'My own opinion is that its adherents are not so many as those even of Mohammedanism; and that, instead of being the most numerous of the religions (so called) of the world, it is only entitled to occupy the fifth place, ranking below Christianity, Confucianism, Brahmanism, and Mohammedanism, and followed, some distance off, by Taoism.'[2]

But it has become sufficiently clear to the reader that the reckoning of numbers—in no case of any value as a test of truth—is peculiarly inapplicable to this case. I may conclude by quoting what I have written elsewhere: 'No such numerical estimate can be of the slightest value; for this important reason, that Buddhism differs from the religions with which it is thus numerically compared—notably from Christianity and Mohammedanism, and, to some degree, from Hinduism—in not claiming exclusive possession of the ground. It is a parasitic religion, ready to thrive where it can, without displacing or excluding others. . . . While the facts about China make it no less than false to say that the Buddhist religion is the sole refuge of five hundred millions of mankind, they show the futility of any positive statement at all about its numbers.'[3]

[1] Quoted by Dr. Legge, *l.c.* p. 7. [2] *l.c.* p. 8.
[3] *Nineteenth Century*, July 1888, p. 121.

The number of Buddhists in Ceylon, by the census of 1891, is 1,877,043; that of Hindus, 723,853, and of Mohammedans, 211,995; while the number of Christians is 302,127.

CHAPTER II

RELATION OF CEYLON BUDDHISM TO THE ORIGINAL STOCK

THE Southern or Ceylon Buddhism was derived from the original stem at an earlier date than the Northern, and before those peculiarities which characterise the Northern school had been developed.

That this is the case might perhaps have been inferred, even if history had been silent, from the nature of the difference between the two schools. When the points of difference are looked at carefully, they do not appear to be chiefly such as the different tempers of the nations or their circumstances might be expected to produce. They do not look like the effects of climate or of local character. They have the appearance of distinctions due to the stock from which each came, rather than to the soil in which each is growing.

It is true that the two main groups into which the different forms of Buddhism fall may roughly be described as 'Northern' and 'Southern;' but there is not to be found anything Northern about the character of the one, anything Southern about the

character of the other. The reverse rather is the case. The 'Northern' displays the more luxuriant growth and the warmer temper. The prosaic and practical Chinese have a form of Buddhism far less simple than the Sinhalese in their gorgeous tropical home.[1]

It is not climate then nor national temperament, in the region where each is now found, that has given to each school of Buddhism its characteristic tone. Each must have come to the region where it now exists marked already with a distinctive character.

Such an inference is confirmed by history. The Ceylon school was established at the earlier date; that of the Northern nations, when time enough had elapsed for the primitive Buddhism to have undergone alterations on its native soil. In Ceylon, Buddhism is believed to have been established about 250 B.C.; it was first definitely carried to China about 70 B.C.[2] In both cases, if the records may be trusted, it was carried direct from India, but at the earlier date (to Ceylon) from an India in which Buddhism was still but little altered from its primitive form;[3] at the later

[1] The Southern Buddhism may be correctly called the Buddhism of Ceylon, as Ceylon is its principal stronghold; from Ceylon were derived that of Burma (in the fifth century A.D.), and that of Siam (in the seventh century). Similarly, the Northern may be named from China, for from China the religion was carried to Corea (in the fourth) and to Japan (in the fifth or sixth century). The Lamaism of Tibet was probably of independent and later origin.

[2] Beal, *Buddhism in China*, p. 53.

[3] 'While in India itself the Buddhist texts experienced new fortunes from century to century, and while the ceremonies of the original church were vanishing continually more and more behind the poetry and fiction of later generations, the church of Ceylon remained true to the simple, homely "Word of the Ancients" (Theraváda).'—Oldenberg, *Buddha*, p. 75.

date (to China) from an India in which very wide divergence had already arisen.[1]

The Indian home of Buddhism was in that celebrated region of the Ganges valley which now contains the cities of Oudh, Benares, and Patna, and part of which is still called Bihar, or 'Wihara Land,' from the numerous dwellings and temples of the Buddhist community.[2] It soon extended far beyond the comparatively narrow limits of its home; but it was still, for some centuries, Indian soil that was the main scene of its activity and extension.

For some time, we may reasonably believe, after the death of its founder, Buddhism retained in India—as the chronicles represent—substantial uniformity. The very minuteness and superficiality of the points which are said to have been contested between the different sects in the fourth century show that they had not diverged widely from one another; and during most part of the two following centuries there were powerful national forces operating to keep them together. This comparative uniformity probably prevailed till late in the third century B.C., that is, until after the date at which the earliest permanent extensions outside India, and notably the mission to Ceylon, are believed to have taken place.

[1] It is true that Asoka, at the earlier date, is said to have sent missions to Cashmere and some other 'Northern' countries. But there is reason to think that he did not succeed in establishing it there any more than in Burma and other 'Southern' countries. It was probably established in Cashmere by influence of Kanishka.

[2] Vihára means originally a 'dwelling' (of monks), and later, 'a temple.'

That this mission was an offshoot from a Buddhism still comparatively unaltered, is proved by the close correspondence between the system witnessed to by Ceylon buildings and records from the beginning onward, and the system exhibited by the oldest books of the Pitakas. The points which characterise the Northern Buddhism, in distinction from the Buddhism of the Pitakas, have never existed in Ceylon.[1]

But there is good reason to believe, that in the interval between the date of the introduction of Buddhism into Ceylon, and that of its introduction into China, the difference of sects in India, which had existed before in superficial matters, widened into a contrast of principle; and that by the date of the mission to China the ascendency was possessed no longer by that branch which most faithfully represented the original stock, but by a branch which had developed new elements. This branch became the new stock from which the various ramifications of the Northern Buddhism sprang. But it had acquired its distinctive character already on Indian soil.

The circumstances under which this took place are unknown to us. There is very little history of India for the two centuries before the Christian era.[2] The

[1] Hiouen Thsang is quoted (by Sir Monier Williams, *Buddhism*, p. 162) as describing a school of the Maháyána as existing as far south as Ceylon. As this traveller did not visit Ceylon, and the statement is contrary to the histories of Ceylon, I venture to set it aside, even if it be a correct inference from the traveller's words.—See Oldenberg, Introduction to Maha Vagga, p. xl. *seq*.

[2] The names of the powerful Indo-Greek Emperor Menander (165-130 B.C. according to Cunningham, *Bhilsa Topes*, p. 127); and of the more truly Indian

kings who immediately followed Asoka raised Buddhist relic shrines, and gave cave-temples to the Community; but inscriptions, which in Asoka's days were so full and intelligent, become, in the times of his successors, few and uninteresting. In Chinese histories there are a few hints of intercourse between China and India, in which allusions to Buddhism occur,[1] but these do not help us. The Pali chronicles themselves, which profess to record the history of Buddhism in India up to Asoka's time, thenceforward leave India to continue that history in Ceylon.

Such light as there is comes from a very different quarter. The Scythians, who swept over North-west India from about B.C. 126, were probably a power favourable to Buddhism, and the name of their great Emperor, Kanishka, is important in its history. Unfortunately, the date of his reign is very uncertain, authorities varying from B.C. 40 to A.D. 100.[2] But it is in connection with his name that a conjecture has been hazarded, which is at least picturesque. What Asoka was in B.C. 250, Kanishka is said to have been in the first century A.D. As Asoka had convened a great Buddhist council at Patna, so (we are told by the Chinese pilgrim Hiouen Thsang, in the seventh century A.D.) did Kanishka in Cashmere. On the

Vikram Aditya, 'the Scythians' foe;' and of Pandion, who sent an embassy to Cæsar Augustus (*Strabo*, xv. 686, 719), emerge with difficulty from the mists of uncertainty. The last-mentioned embassy was accompanied by an ascetic, almost certainly of some Buddhist profession (Sarmanacarya), who burnt himself at Athens.

[1] Beal, *Buddhism in China*, p. 42.

[2] Sir W. W. Hunter, *Indian Empire*, pp. 147, 176.

details of what we are told about this council no reliance can be placed; but it is[1] natural to guess that it may virtually have been in doctrine, as it was in place, a 'Northern' council, and that it may have given authority and permanence to that development.[2] It was not apparently by Kanishka that Buddhism was sent to China, but his work was very likely a continuation of the movement out of which that mission sprang.

Such may possibly have been the culmination of the development to which we are referring; but even if it be so its rise and growth remain untraced.

That at a later date two distinct forms of Buddhism existed and flourished in India side by side, we know from Fa Hien, the enthusiastic Chinese traveller of the beginning of the fifth century A.D.[3] He made a pilgrimage to all countries in which relics or shrines or associations of the Buddha were to be found, and met in almost every part of India with some communities who followed what he calls the 'Great Vehicle,' and some who followed the 'Little Vehicle.' It has naturally been supposed that these corresponded to the 'Northern' and the 'Southern' systems;[4] but we have no means of knowing whether this was in any degree the case.[5]

[1] See Professor Rhys Davids's *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 198, and Hunter, *l.c.* The latter attaches more value to the story, as does also Sir M. Monier Williams, *Buddhism*, p. 158.

[2] Sir M. Monier Williams thinks it was the cause.

[3] See Legge's *Travels of Fâ Hien* and the note on p. 345.

[4] So Hunter, *ibid.* p. 145. Sir Monier M. Williams, *ibid.* p. 159.

[5] There are some indications in the Pitakas of contempt on the part of the orthodox for the professors of some methods called 'Vehicles' (yánam), and this

But it is not necessary for my purpose either to ascertain by what stages or under what conditions that phase of Buddhism, to whose different issues we give the common name of 'Northern,' took shape; or to pronounce exactly how much of its divergence from the original had been accomplished before it was carried to the 'Northern' countries, and how much was accomplished after it had been established there. Whether or not the essential part of this divergence had taken place before[1] Buddhism was carried to China, it is certain that it had not taken place when Buddhism was carried to Ceylon.

The reader is now, I hope, prepared to see distinctly what is the line which I am going to follow in this book. It is the line of the more direct stream of Buddhism, first in India, and then in Ceylon. No account will be taken (except by the way) either of the stream which diverged to China, or of the main stream—whether one or divided—which continued to flow on in India till it lost itself in the sands of Brahmanism. The course we shall pursue is that pursued by the Pali chronicles (of the Dipavansa and the Mahavansa), first in Magadha, from Gotama to Asoka; and then in Ceylon, from Mahinda to the present day.

—which occurs in a controversial and probably late group of Suttas—may mark the beginning of the use of the term; but it does not amount to a trace of the distinction between the 'Great' and 'Little Vehicles.'

[1] Though an opinion somewhat different from this, viz., 'that there was but very little difference between early Northern Buddhism and the Buddhism of the Pitakas,' was formerly expressed by Dr. Rhys Davids (*Buddhism*, p. 240), and is implied by Sir M. Monier Williams, *l.c.* The question is partly one of degree.

The epochs of our historical sketch will be the dates of—

Gotama himself, founder of the religion, about 500 B.C.

Asoka, the most powerful patron of early Buddhism, *c.* 250 B.C., and Mahinda, his son, its founder in Ceylon.

Buddhaghosha, its greatest commentator, *c.* 400 A.D.

Parakrama Bahu, the greatest Buddhist king of Ceylon, *c.* A.D. 1200.

Sumangala Terunnanse, the present chief of the 'Community' in Ceylon.

(The other great epoch, that of Kanishka, whatever may be its claims to historical character, lies outside our course.)

CHAPTER III

GENERAL HISTORICAL SKETCH

BUDDHISM began by the teaching of Gotama, in the latter part of the century 600—500 B.C.

To the question: What was at that time the condition of India? the answer must be gathered chiefly from other sources than the Buddhist books. To depend on those books for the answer would be to assume—what is certainly not the case—that they were composed, in their present form in or near the first days of the religion; or at any rate it would be to assume—what is extremely improbable—that those who compiled them, from one hundred and fifty to three hundred years later, knew and described the customs and surroundings of Gotama's day, not of their own. This cannot be supposed. All that can be safely inferred, as to conditions of society, as to customs, thought, and sciences, from the Buddhist books, concerns the conditions which existed when the books were compiled. As to a few definite historical points, names of persons, tribes, and places, and as to leading facts in the history of the religion itself, the books probably have preserved a true tradition, but the setting must be that of their own

day. It is, for instance, unsafe to infer, from the incidental mention of writing in the Pitakas, that writing was known in Gotama's days; or, from the mention of monasteries, that these existed before Gotama introduced them. If these are facts, they must be learnt from other sources.

It is therefore with only a limited degree of accuracy that we can construct from Buddhist books a picture of Indian life in the sixth century B.C. The Jain books are said to confirm the picture furnished by those of Buddhism, but they are of course liable to the same objection. The life they describe is that of the time of their composition, not of the time to which they profess to refer.[1]

But what follows is borrowed in part from writers who have studied the pre-Buddhist literature. For before Buddhism arose, India had indeed a literature (un-written) but no history.

Such knowledge as we can obtain extends to a small part only of what is now called India. The Aryan race, with its civilisation and its thought, had spread eastward from the Oxus and Indus to the Ganges valley, and what are now the North-western Provinces were occupied by Aryans; but if they had made any advance into the further East and the South, it was only by scattered settlements.

[1] I cannot accept without this qualification what Dr. Oldenberg says:—'The Pali books give us an exceedingly concrete picture of the movements of the religious world of India at the period in which . . . Buddha played a part in it.'—*Buddha*, p. 77. See also an eloquent description in Rhys Davids's *Buddhism*, p. 22.

Of the original inhabitants—black races as they are called in the Pitakas—we cannot speak. India in the sixth century B.C. means for us the Aryan inhabitants of the Ganges valley.

There was no one vast empire; small tribes or clans still divided or disputed the land; but were beginning to be amalgamated by the increasing power of particular princes. The Pitakas indicate this in their tradition of the wars of Ajátasattru, and of the foundation and growth of Patna.

Among these different Aryan clans was spoken a great variety of dialects of the one common language, —which had not yet a name,—but to the central or ideal form of which the name Sanscrit (the 'perfect') was afterwards given.

The Vedas were already echoes from a far antiquity, and the memory of their *Rishis* was already a mysterious tradition; the old sky-worship, and the high simplicity and daylight freedom of that world were gone; on the other side, the innumerable idols and the elaborate systems of caste and law, which make up Hinduism, were only beginning to appear. The Laws of Manu were probably not yet drawn up;[1] but most of the customs and rules, which they embody, were already in force, recognised, though with nothing like the rigidity which was long afterwards given to them on the supposed authority of that famous code. The six philosophical schools were not yet developed, but the

[1] Attributed by most of the recent authorities to about 500 B.C., by some to as late as 200 B.C.

spirit of metaphysical and moral inquiry was at work. Those strange struggles of thought, by which, out of inquiry into the meaning of the old Vedic words and rites, were gradually wrung, during two centuries of bewilderment, the ideas of personality and of the unity of being, had attained to comparative clearness in the best of the Brahmanic Sutras.[1]

The characteristics of the Indian mind were in full play. Social and political interests were insignificant; but the air was full of intellectual effort and moral earnestness, in which the sage or teacher was more than either priest or king.[2]

But the specific results in art and science were still to come, or barely beginning. That astonishing effort of grammatical analysis, *Panini's Grammar*, dates from about 350 B.C., but the studies which culminated in it may have been begun by the time we are considering. The earliest recorded astronomical calculations appear to date from the beginning of this period (B.C. 636). Medicine may have been already studied, and the sacrificial system led necessarily to some knowledge of anatomy, but the development of Indian medicine was due to Buddhism.[3] When Gotama was born all this was just beginning.

2. At such a time it was that the rumour began to spread from district to district, and from town to town,

[1] See Oldenberg on the Satapathabrahmana, *Buddha*, p. 25 *seq.*
[2] See Hunter, *Indian Empire*, p. 78-114, and Sir M. Monier Williams, *Hinduism*, p. 54.
[3] The story of Jivaka, in Maha Vagga viii, is interesting in this light; especially the test of his progress, viii. 1, 7.

that a distinguished teacher had arisen among the Sakyans. The Sakyans were neither a central nor a very powerful people. Their home was rather far northward, on the outskirts of the Aryan land. In fact, suspicions have been thrown on their claim to be of Aryan race at all. Their ready enlistment on the side of innovation, and the ready adoption of Buddhism by the later Scythian conquerors; the non-Aryan cast of features in the traditional images of the Buddha, and lastly, the name Sakya—these amongst other considerations have seemed to some to indicate that they were a Scythian tribe.[1] But the conjecture ought to be allowed no weight against the unbroken tradition that they were Aryan, and against the fact that the movement which issued from them laid hold, without exciting any race antagonism, of the Aryan-Indian world. I note the suspicion rather to emphasise the fact that the Sakyans were not—what later legend naturally would make them—the central and ruling people of Jambudwipa,[2] nor their Raja its Emperor. He was, in fact, rather the chief of an aristocratic ('rajput') clan, than the king of a kingdom.[3] The land which the Sakyans occupied lay near the roots of the Himalayas, on the little river Rohini, at Kapilavastu or Kapila-town. This was about 100 miles north-east of the great city of Benares, and at a greater distance from what were then the rising

[1] See Hunter, *Indian Empire*, p. 176 and reff. there.

[2] The mythical and classical name of India, supposed to be an island-continent, and the centre of the world.

[3] See Rhys Davids, *Hibbert Lectures*, 126; Oldenberg, p. 97.

states of Magadha on the east and Kosala on the west.

Not only did the reputation of the Sakyan teacher spread to the neighbouring towns, but he went himself on foot to Benares, the sacred city, and then to Rajagaha, the city of the Magadhans, and soon Buddhism became known to Bimbisara, its king.

3. There is no reason to think that any of those who saw the wandering teacher, or heard that a son of the Sakyan chief had left his home on such a mission, felt any surprise or admiration at his choice of life. The rule that every well-born man, when he had fulfilled for a time the duties of a householder, should leave them for a life of ascetic contemplation—this rule, so strange to us, was probably not yet formulated, as it was in the Manu Code, as a fundamental principle of the ideal life. But it must already have been at least a familiar, probably a very frequent incident. That Gotama, the son of Suddhodana, had left his native Kapila, and at Benares had announced himself as the teacher of truths hitherto unknown,—all the interest of this report lay in the question: What is the new method which Gotama professes?

But to those who came in contact with the young mendicant, there was more to attract attention. His youth—he had not waited as most men did till the bloom of life was rubbed off;—the dignity and grace of deportment which the tradition, probably with truth, assigns to him; his singular courtesy, and readiness; the wealth of illustration with which he set

forth his tenets;—these things, as well as the commoner gift of intense belief in his own convictions, secured for him hearers and followers, and soon installed him in the favour of the Magadhan king.

4. Gotama lived, we are told, to extreme old age, and passed a long life in teaching from town to town and village to village. He saw the number of his followers grow till they formed a community, for which he had to provide, step by step as occasion suggested, rules of life and the outline of a constitution. Not only had many attached themselves to him of those who were already ascetics, finding in his doctrines what satisfied them better than their own, but the movement became popular; the enthusiasm for a homeless life became infectious; and multitudes, many of them young as he had been, pledged themselves to his rules. By the end of his life he may have had as many followers as a far humbler teacher, St. Francis of Assisi, attracted to his brotherhood, though not so many as already, in a shorter time, in these days of railways and printing presses, have flocked to the standard of 'General' Booth. And before his death a marked position among his disciples had belonged, and had even been assigned by himself to some, who were nearest to him by personal affection, or by insight into his doctrines, or as most perfectly fulfilling his ideal.

But Gotama nominated no successor, and left behind him no writings. He had urged his followers to depend upon themselves; and although he had

impressed upon them that when he was gone his principles would take his place as their teacher, yet he left it entirely to themselves to apply them :— 'You must be your own refuge, your own light.'[1]

5. Here ends the first stage in our history. Gotama's death must be placed, at any rate, between B.C. 500 and B.C. 450, and the date B.C. 477 is the most probable. From this date to that of Asoka, which we may call B.C. 250, is the second period—the period of the compilation of the books—the age of the Pitakas and, according to tradition, of the councils. The Buddhist tradition—obviously on a hundred grounds incredible—is that the Pitakas were compiled, full and final, at a council held immediately after the decease of the Buddha, and that nothing more was done between that day and Asoka's than to guard them from the slightest alteration. The first council, at the outset of the period, established the canon ; the third, in Asoka's reign, reaffirmed it ; while the second, half-way between the two, vindicated the received rules of monastic life against certain minute innovations. It is easier to set this tradition aside than to ascertain what is true. But we shall have no difficulty in deciding that during the greater part of these two centuries the compilation of the Pitakas was in progress ; our doubt will be whether it was completed by the end. Of the literary work of this period, part was, no doubt, the record from actual memory of what Gotama had said and done ; a larger

[1] Mahâparinibbâna Sutta, p. 112.

part was the composition, by generations of his followers, of discourses and arguments based upon his principles; another, the development in detail of such rules of life and organisation as he had established; while no inconsiderable part was the collection and appropriation to Buddhist ideas of older or extraneous poems, folk-lore, and religious treatises.

During the two centuries, or two centuries and a half, which saw the formation of this mass of literature, an event occurred of incalculable importance—the invasion of India, and the partial occupation of it, by the Greeks. Before that event—that is, before 326—the movement towards the establishment of powerful monarchies had been growing; the Greeks gave their support to the leader whose star was in the ascendant, and the result was the erection of an Empire which extended in some sense all over India, and even to Ceylon. The centre of this empire was at Pataliputra (now Patna), the new capital of the once humble Magadha, in which the Buddha had been welcomed by Bimbisara.

It was no doubt in part the presence of the Greeks that stimulated the literary growth of Buddhism; and there are traces in the 'sacred books' of Greek legends and perhaps of Greek philosophy. The extension meanwhile of the Buddhist Community, which went on rapidly, both aided the increase of political unity and was aided by it. When the great emperor, at the height of his power, became not only a Buddhist but a zealous patron and propagator of Buddhism, it

attained, on its own native soil, the highest climax of its vitality. This was the era of Asoka.

6. Among the fruits of Asoka's zeal is said to have been the conversion of Ceylon; and, if it be his work at all, it is the part of his work which has had most enduring result. That Buddhism was established in Ceylon by Mahinda, and during the time of the Ceylon king who was contemporary, or nearly so, with Asoka, cannot, I think, be seriously disputed. But that Mahinda was Asoka's son, as the Ceylon historians say, and came to Ceylon direct from Magadha,—this some critics doubt.[1] They think it more likely that the religion, having spread by this time to the southern coasts of India, found its way to Ceylon from thence; and the desire of the native chroniclers to connect their island with the famous Asoka is thought to be explanation enough of the tradition. I shall give reasons hereafter for believing the historian: for the present it is enough to note that the third scene of our drama is to be played in Ceylon, and dates from Mahinda in the latter part of the third century B.C.

In India the Greek power was breaking up under the inroads of Scythian invaders from the north. The new conquerors favoured Buddhism, and thereby caused resistance to Buddhism to be associated with resistance to the alien, and so stimulated the revolt of Brahmanism, which began thenceforward to regain its

[1] See also Oldenberg, *Buddha*, p. 75 *n.*; and *id.* Vinaya Pitaka, vol. i. p. xlix. *seq.*

hold in India. But in Ceylon no deep-rooted national system, like Brahmanism in India, had been displaced. No invader brought to the island, as the Scythians did to North-west India, conquest associated with Buddhism; the invader was usually the Brahman, and all the national spirit was thus enlisted on the side of the religion of Mahinda.

Of the condition of Ceylon in the last two centuries B.C. and the first three centuries of our era, the historians give us only occasional glimpses; but on the whole we may say that during the earlier part of that period Buddhism was growing and becoming more and more established in the island; and that in the latter part, from B.C. 50 to A.D. 300, it was less flourishing. Still, throughout the country to this day, especially in the north-central and north-western central regions, many a carven pillar, and many dome-like dagobas (or relic shrines), and not a few inscriptions in the Asoka characters, bear witness to the activity of the early Buddhist kings, in those six centuries. The fourth century A.D. saw great advances made in literature and art, both devoted to the service of the religion.

7. The next epoch is that of the decisive impetus given to Buddhist learning by Buddhaghosha.

Mahinda, whoever he was, or in whatever sense he was Asoka's son, introduced the Pitaka texts into Ceylon. With them historians tell us that he brought with him also the Commentaries, which he translated into Sinhalese. The Pali originals of these were soon lost sight of, but the Sinhalese versions

were scrupulously preserved. But in India, at the end of six centuries, the Commentaries were not to be had. According to the tradition just mentioned, they had been lost. It is more probable that they had never existed—or that the greater part of them had never existed—in North India, but were composed either in Southern India or in Ceylon. At any rate, early in the fifth century, the learned Buddhaghosha, a native of Magadha, came to Ceylon to obtain the Commentaries; translated into Pali what he found, and composed more. The Ceylon school of Buddhism has been ever since entirely moulded by these works, and they are considered in Ceylon as absolute authorities on the interpretation of the texts. The European scholars who have made the texts known in Europe, have occasionally set this authority aside in one detail or another; but in general, it may be said that the European translations represent the traditional interpretation as it was left by Buddhaghosha.[1]

8. The scene of this work was Anuradhapura, in (what is now) the North Central Province of Ceylon. This city was the magnificent seat of the Buddhist kings for several centuries. From the ninth century A.D. onward, they made their capital for the most part at Polonnaruwa, somewhat further to the east.

In the earlier part of this period there was little,

[1] Buddhaghosha is not known to the Northern Buddhists, but the Burmese traditions fully support that of Ceylon.

The Siamese tradition that Buddhaghosha introduced Buddhism into Ceylon is a mere mistake.—See Art. 'Buddhaghosha,' *Indian Antiquities*, April 1890.

except the quarrels of members of the reigning family, and occasional invasions, to interrupt the course of official patronage of the national religion. But from the tenth century onwards, constant invasions from Southern India, of Cholians and Tamils, who were hostile to Buddhism, led to the destruction of many shrines and viharas, to the expulsion of monks, and even the persecution of Buddhists. Under these circumstances the religion seems to have languished, till the victories of Parakrama established him in undisputed power, which he used for the promotion and reformation of Buddhism, and the erection of innumerable buildings for its service. He was first the great national hero, and then the Augustus of Ceylon.

This brilliant epoch was followed by troublous times, in which the famous shrines were destroyed, and the chief relics had to be hidden, till another conqueror and reviver of religion came. Such vicissitudes continued during the rest of Sinhalese history. When Europeans first settled in the country, *c.* 1500 A.D., the native religion was not flourishing; and it appears to have continued to decline, in spite of efforts made (as the Mahavansa relates) at different dates to revive it by getting monks and books from Aracan and Siam. During the pressure of the Dutch wars it fell so low that, the historian more than once says, 'there was not one monk in Ceylon.'

Portuguese and Dutch authority—and, to some extent, in the latter case, at least, persecution—had

gone far to extinguish the religion, which had little internal vitality when the British occupation began in 1796. From that time all hostile pressure was removed; but the influence and example of the English, and of the most educated and enterprising of the low-country Sinhalese, necessarily operated in favour of Christianity. Buddhism became more and more the religion of the less civilised and the less prosperous. It had no royal patrons, and few respected professors; and, twenty years ago, even intelligent observers thought that it was all but extinct.

The last fifteen years have seen a remarkable revival. This has been due mainly to external influences, and is rather academic than national; but it is a real movement, and has a few leaders of high character. The wave has, however, as I think, already reached its highest point. As a phase of educated thought it may be traceable for some time to come; but as a popular force it is already passing by.

PART II

BUDDHISM IN MAGADHA

CHAPTER IV

LIFE OF GOTAMA

IN the oldest collection of Buddhist literature, that is, in the Three Pitakas, or three-fold collection, there is no biography of the Buddha; and before I enter into the story of his life I must tax the reader's patience by a short account of the sources from which it is derived.

Though there are traces of earlier fragments of a biographical nature imbedded in the text as we have it,[1] it is difficult to think that any complete biography can have existed before the Pitakas were compiled; for it would surely not have been lost.

This is sufficiently accounted for by the consideration, that it was the teaching more than the person—the teaching primarily and the person only secondarily—that interested the early Buddhists.[2] They did not

[1] See below, p. 86.

[2] Even within the Pitakas a progress may be observed from earlier writings, in which the individual Gotama is only venerated as the teacher of a certain doctrine, to later writings in which he is beginning to be the object of the believers' admiration for his own sake. Contrast the language of the Maha Vagga with such a passage as that in Maj. Nik. 22 where Gotama says: [Those who have not even entered the paths] 'are sure of heaven if they have love and faith towards me.'

call themselves Gotamists—it would have been alien to the whole spirit of their founder—nor even did they call themselves Buddhists. Even when they said 'I take refuge in the Buddha,' it was not Gotama's acts nor his character nor his surviving influence, that they placed their trust in, but the doctrines 'of all the Buddhas,' of which, in this age, Gotama was the teacher.

Even such biographies as do exist are only partial and supplementary. And the oldest of them has no external claim in its existing form to an antiquity greater than that of the fourth century A.D., and bears the undisguised marks of compilation from older sources.

But materials for large portions of a biography are to be found in the Pitakas. At two points of Gotama's life, namely at the opening of his career as a teacher, and at its close, his movements and words are narrated in minute detail,—these are the two chief portions of biographical material,—and besides these two, there are many passages in which, as occasion has arisen, have been preserved records of events in his earlier life or incidents of his conduct as a teacher. Into these three groups we may divide the elements of biography which the Pitakas supply.

The detailed account of Gotama's assumption of Buddhahood, and entrance on his career as the Buddha, forms the introduction to the Rules of the Community which he founded. For that Community is represented as growing out of the truths which he discovered, and

the circumstances under which he was led to disclose them. Thus the first book of the Maha Vagga, or main division, of the Vinaya or Rule of (monastic) Training, is largely biographical.

The record of his last days forms a Sutta or discourse by itself, in the Sutta Pitaka or collection of sermons; and parts of it are found also, in no very clear connection with their surroundings, in the fifth book of the same Maha Vagga.

The third group consists of a multitude of scattered passages. Some are in various parts of the Vinaya. We find certain rules assigned to certain occasions, and in connection with these we read of Gotama's interviews with kings, with disciples, with members of his own family; and a few allusions are made to the earlier period, before he came forward as the Buddha. In such passages[1] the incidents are usually taken for granted; and there is reason to think, as has been already hinted, that some at least of them had already been recorded in some earlier narrative. In the Sutta collection also the reader meets every now and then with references—placed in the lips of Gotama or of his disciples—both to such events as the Vinaya has already mentioned, and to other details or events.[2] In a majority of instances, such points as the Suttas contribute are more elaborate, more detailed, more marvellous, than those which the Vinaya books contain.

[1] The chief are Maha V. I, 21-24, 54, v. 28, and Culla V. xi. I. vii. 3, vi. 4.

[2] Such are especially Ariyapariyesana S. (Maj. Nik. 26), and *ib.* Nos. 4, 35, 36, etc.; Sámaññaphala S. (Digh. Nik. ii.) and in the same Nik. iv., vi.: in Sutta Nipáta, Nálaka S. iii. 11.

Of the three groups into which we have thus distinguished the biographical data of the Pitakas, there is little doubt that the oldest is the great passage in the Maha Vagga,[1] about the opening of the Buddha's teaching career; that the account of the closing scenes in the Parinibbana Sutta is much later;[2] and that of the scattered notices some are nearly as old as the former, and some more recent even than the latter.

But it is impossible at present to discriminate these dates with certainty. I shall therefore place before the reader the Pitaka biography as it would be constructed on the assumption that all parts of the Pitakas are of equal authority. It may conveniently be divided into five sections. I shall not refrain, however, from indicating from time to time what I think the traces of a variety of date among the elements of the Pitaka books themselves.

§ 1.[3] In the days of Bimbisara, king of Magadha, or shortly before his time, *Gotama was born, the son of Suddhodana of Kapilavatthu in the Sakyan country.*[4] *His mother died in his infancy, and he was nursed by his aunt, Pajapati.*[5] The Sakyan clan was a noble and very proud one, and Gotama was of the purest Khat-

[1] 'Bears unmistakably the stamp of high antiquity.'—Oldenberg, *Buddha*, p. 113.

[2] 'Probably later.'—Oldenberg, *Buddha*, p. 115, and see below, p. 287.

[3] The portions italicised are those founded on the Vinaya Pitaka. Only one quotation is given for each event or detail, but as a rule each is mentioned in several or in very many places. The exception is the visit of Asita, which is mentioned, as far as I know, only in the passage quoted (Sutt. Nip. iii. 11). The Sutta in which it occurs bears every mark of an early date.

[4] Maha Vagga, i. 54. 1.

[5] Culla Vagga, x. 1. 3.

tiya[1] race on both father's and mother's side.[2] The knowledge of his birth was made known by rejoicing deities to a hermit named Asita, who thereon repaired to Suddhodana's palace, saw the child in his glory surrounded by deities, etc., and announced to the Sakyans that the child was to be a Buddha.[3] The young man grew up in the midst of wealth and ease :[4] he had (according to the conventional description of luxury) three palaces, one for each of the seasons.[5] But he sometimes considered the sadness and inevitable approach of old age and death,[6] and under the influence of such thoughts, while still in the prime of youth and beauty *he left his home*[7] (as many older than he, but few so young and happy, had done), his father and mother weeping as he went; *his father's heart pierced with excessive grief,*[8] *leaving his wife and his son Rahula behind.*[9]

He *became the pupil of two wise teachers, Alara Kalama and Uddaka Ramaputta;*[10] *and afterwards the companion in austerities of five mendicants in the neighbourhood of Benares.*[11] The details of his austerities are given in conventional descriptions as of unequalled severity: he starved himself, remained in one position, held his breath till his frame was attenuated to the utmost imaginable degree and his strength

[1] Digh. Nik. vi.

[2] His feet were marked with a mystic wheel (Angut., iv. 36), and he had the thirty-two marks of a 'great one' on his person.

[3] Sutt. Nip. iii. 11.

[4] Digh. Nik. iv. 6, etc.

[5] Maj. Nik. 75.

[6] Sanyut. Nik. xii. 10. 2.

[7] Maj. Nik. iv.

[8] Maha Vagga, i. 54. 5.

[9] Maha Vagga, i. 54. 2.

[10] Maha Vagga, i. 6. 1.

[11] Maha Vagga, i. 6. 10.

was entirely exhausted.[1] *At last he saw the uselessness of such austerities, and, to the indignation of the five mendicants, gave them up.*[2] We are not told what led him to the more successful method; but so it was, that *sitting one night under the tree which thenceforth was called the Buddha tree*[3] (of this age, other ages and other Buddhas had other trees), and there practising meditation according to the method which he afterwards taught, or asking himself, as all Buddhas had done before him, whence is death, etc.,[4] *he arrived at perfect insight, as he believed, into the nature and cause of sorrow and the way of destroying it. He was then Buddha, the Buddha of the age. He had attained, unaided, and by direct insight and conscious realisation, the saving truth for the benefit of gods and men.*

This is the first chapter of the life, the history of the first Buddha days. On this it is to be observed that the story as thus extracted from the older group of authorities, contains, so far, no point of likeness to the recorded life of Jesus Christ. The nearest approach to any such thing is the prognostication by Asita of the child's future career. This belongs to the familiar class of stories which tell of signs accompanying the birth of famous men; and it takes its particular shape from the visit of the astrologer—which is still

[1] Maj. Nik. 12.
[2] Maha Vagga, i. 6. 10.
[3] *Passim.* The account in Maj. Nik. iv. differs a little from others.
[4] Sanyut. Nik. xii. 4. 9.; varying a little from *passim*, Angut. iv. 21.

almost universal among the Sinhalese—to prepare the horoscope of a new-born child.[1]

It will also be observed that the whole of the elaborate details of the 'Great Renunciation,' as Europeans have called it, are wanting: the four signs, the sleeping babe, the flying horse, and the rest. One feature which has been woven into that legend does occur in the Maha Vagga,—the scene of the sleeping women in their uncomely disorder,—but it occurs not in reference to Gotama but to another person. Further, the temptation by Mára, in the shape and meaning which it bears in the later story,[2] is altogether absent. There is no hint of any appeal made either to the lust or the fears of the hero; there is neither tempest nor siren. The crisis through which Gotama is represented as having passed is one of intellectual insight—not of moral choice.

The materials of the biography up to this point have been brought together, as the references show, from many different passages, scattered about the books. The events of the second period, that of the founding of the Community, are more systematically recorded in the first book of the Maha Vagga.[3] I give the substance of its chief contents.

[1] The visit of Asita is not mentioned by Professor Oldenberg among the points contained in the oldest tradition, but whatever be the date of the Sutta which contains it, it certainly belongs to the older cycle of traditions.

[2] The contrast between the poetical development and the prose of the 'canonical' books is well drawn out by Professor Oldenberg, *Buddha*, pp. 102-105.

[3] To this book is prefixed, as introduction, an account of the first events after Gotama's attaining Buddhahood down to the conversion of his two chief disciples, Sàriputta and Mogallana (i. 24). 'Among the elements of

§ 2. For seven days the newly 'enlightened' one, the blessed Buddha, sat under the tree of enlightenment, the Bodhi-tree (in Sinhalese 'Bo'-tree) enjoying the bliss of emancipation,—thoroughly experiencing it and penetrating its meaning. At the end of these seven days[1] the series of causes which lead to suffering was clear to him in its details. During each of the three watches of the night he reviewed the series, and pronounced his solemn sense that all doubt was dispelled, and the true nature of things was clear.[2] The hosts of Mara were scattered, as clouds are scattered by the sun.[3] Next, for seven days, he sat in like trance under another tree, where he pronounced, in answer to an arrogant Brahman who accosted him, the characteristics of a true Brahman—purity, self-control, knowledge, and holy life. For a third seven days, he sat under a third tree, sheltered by the coils and hood of a mystic serpent, who at the end of the time appeared as a young man and did reverence to the Buddha, and elicited from him this declaration of the nature of

historical or legendary character with which, in the Vinaya Pitaka, the discussion of the monastic discipline is interwoven, this account occupies by far the first place, both in extent and in importance, for it contains the oldest version accessible to us now, and most probably, for ever, of what the Buddhist fraternity deemed to be the history of their master's life in its most important period.'—Rhys Davids and Oldenberg, *Sacred Books of the East*, xiii. 73 *n.*

[1] Or during each night of these.—See Rhys Davids, p. 75.

[2] It was in the first watch that he uttered what is really the earliest Buddha utterance (as Buddhaghosha admits 'some said'): 'Verily when things as they are become clear to the Brahman in ardent meditation, then all his doubts depart, as he knows things in their reality and their causes.' The famous verse, 'Anekajátisaṁsáraṁ,' etc., is a later composition.

[3] This is the only reference here to Mára, and he is evidently here an opponent rather than a tempter; an adversary in an intellectual rather than in a moral struggle. Here is the germ of the later legend of his elaborate attack.

happiness: 'Happy is the solitude of him who is full of joy, who has learnt the Truth, who sees (the Truth). Happy is freedom from malice in this world, self-restraint towards all beings that have life. Happy is freedom from lust in this world, getting beyond all desires; the putting away of that pride which comes from the thought "I am"! This truly is the highest happiness.'[1] A fourth period of seven days was passed under a fourth tree, and there the Buddha received his first disciples. Two merchants, Tapussa and Bhallika, acting on the suggestion of a 'deity' who had been their kinsman in a former life, offered to Gotama rice-cakes and honey. The four great gods—guardians of the four quarters of the world—provided four stone bowls, and in these the Buddha accepted and ate the offering. The two merchants then enrolled themselves as his disciples, 'taking refuge' in the Buddha and in the Doctrine. There was as yet no 'Community'—the third 'precious object' of faith—so their peculiar form of profession (the two-fold) marked the first stage in the erection of the system.

Gotama then arose out of that state of meditation in which he had passed these four weeks, and returned to the second of the four trees. There, we read, the thought occurred to him, 'I have acquired this knowledge, but it is deep and difficult, and mankind are shallow and given up to desires; they will

[1] Maha Vagga, i. 3. 4. This and other translations marked *S.B.E.* are quoted from *Sacred Books of the East*, etc.: for the rest the present author is responsible. But most of the quotations for which no exact reference is given are freely abridged; when the quotation is literal, the reference is given.

not understand me; why should I weary myself with teaching it?' For a while this idea possessed him, and he gave utterance to it in a stanza which was *anything but inspired*.[1] There is no reference in the Maha Vagga to Mara as having suggested this idea, it was 'only too natural,' and arose of itself in the mind of Gotama. But in the Sutta which records Gotama's last days, a late Sutta, though of the older cycle, he is made to say, that at the time of his attaining Buddhahood Mara tried to tempt him instead of preaching to enter Nirvana at once—to be what another development of the idea called 'a Buddha for himself alone'.

For a moment the hopes of the world's blessing hung in suspense. But the great lord of all the gods, the supreme Brahma, saw the danger, and came himself to entreat the Buddha not to withhold the doctrine. 'There are,' he urged, 'some beings with eyes so purged from the dust of desire as to be able to apprehend it; open the door to them; look down from the height of truth on the perishing multitude, and pity them.'[2] Thrice he urged his petition before the Buddha could be persuaded; but at last Gotama looked abroad with his Buddha-eyes and saw that it was so; there were some beings, like lotus-flowers, emerging in different measures from the water, on the petals of some of the uppermost of which not a drop

[1] The translators leave 'anacchariya' untranslated (*Sacred Books of the East*, *l.c.*) but I follow the Sinhalese tradition in rendering it 'non-supernatural,' which is believed to be the meaning of the commentary 'anu-acchariya'.

[2] Contrast Lucretius, ii. 1.

of water hangs—beings clear in different measures from the dust of desire; and he granted the great deity's earnest prayer. Brahma did homage and disappeared.

In spite of the supernatural embellishments of this story, what strikes one most in it is its human naturalness.

The same naïveté characterises the next event. 'To whom,' thought the new Buddha, 'shall I first preach? Who will be able to understand?' And he thought at once of his two old friends, 'Alára Káláma and Uddaka Rámaputta, his companions in his earliest asceticism, both men of noble nature. But deities informed him that they had but lately died.[1] Next his mind turned to the five mendicants who had afterwards been his companions in austerity, and who had done much for him; and perceiving, by supernatural vision, that they were living in the deer-park at Benares, he started thither.

This was a moment, as later Buddhism looked back to it, of central importance. For to those five mendicants in the deer-park Isipatana, the first sermon, or exposition of the law, was to be addressed. It reckons, along with the moment of Buddhahood and the moment of final Nirvana, as one of the three great epochs of every Buddha's career. It is in accordance with this view of the expedi-

[1] I cannot sympathise with those controversialists who urge this ignorance of the death of these two men as fatal to Gotama's claims. It is of course an admission that he was not literally, at all times and of all matters, omniscient; but an admission more creditable than damaging.

tion to Benares that the episode which follows finds place.

On the road to Benares, Gotama fell in with a member of one of the sects of naked ascetics, Upaka by name, himself a hermit and a seeker after truth; and Upaka said to him: 'Your countenance, friend, is serene; your complexion is pure and bright. In whose name, friend, have you retired from the world? Who is your teacher? Whose doctrine do you profess?[1] The reply was a proud one: 'I follow no teacher. I have overcome all foes and all stains; I am superior to all men and to all gods: I am the absolute Buddha. And I am going now to Benares to set in motion the Wheel of the Law, as a king the triumphant wheel of his kingdom. I am the Conqueror.' Upaka replied, 'It may be so;' but shook his head, and went his way.

Gotama went on to the deer-park at Benares. When his five former companions saw him coming, they agreed among themselves to show by their way of receiving him that they regarded him as one who had fallen away from his high aspirations and ascetic efforts, and had returned to the pleasures of an easy life. They would not, they agreed, salute him or rise or take his bowl. But as he drew near an over-mastering impulse led them to break their compact. They rose to meet him; one took his bowl, another brought water to wash his feet, and so on. But they addressed him by his old name in the old way.

[1] Maha Vagga, i. 6. 7; *S.B.E.* xiii.

When they spoke to him thus, he replied: 'Do not address the Tathágata[1] by his name, and with the appellation "Friend." The Tathagata, O Bhikkhus, is the holy absolute Sambuddha. Give ear, O Bhikkhus! The immortal (Amata) has been won (by me). I will teach you: to you I preach the doctrine. If you walk in the way I show you, you will ere long have penetrated to the truth, having yourselves known and seen it face to face; and you will live in the possession (even in this life)[2] of that highest goal of the holy life, for the sake of which noble youths fully give up the world and go forth into the homeless state.' To this the five replied: 'By austerities such as you practised with us, you did not obtain this insight; how much less is it likely that you have done so in a life of ease?' Gotama repudiated the charge of having returned to a life of ease, and repeated his proud assertion. The monks replied as before, and a second time the Buddha made the same answer. They repeated their doubts a third time, and then Gotama challenged them to say whether he had ever, in old days, spoken to them in such terms of self-assertion. They admitted that he had not; and he proceeded to lay down his fundamental principles. Neither the extreme of indulgence nor the extreme of austerity, but the middle way between these two has led him

[1] A title of the Buddha, which is variously explained. In these pages it is frequently represented by 'Buddha.'

[2] Dittheva dhamme.—Maha Vagga, i. 6. 12. The phrase seems to be omitted in *S.B.E.* xiii., whence the rest of the passage is quoted.

to insight and wisdom. This middle way, which leads to calm, to knowledge, to Nirvana, is the holy Eightfold Path of right belief, right aim, right speech, right conduct, right livelihood, right endeavour, right recollectedness, right meditation.[1]

Next he propounds the 'Four Noble Truths.' 'This, O Bhikkhus, is the noble truth of Suffering; birth is suffering; decay is suffering; illness is suffering; death is suffering; presence of objects we hate is suffering; separation from objects we love is suffering; not to obtain what we desire is suffering: briefly, the five-fold clinging to existence is suffering.

'This, O Bhikkhus, is the noble truth of the Cause of suffering: thirst, that leads to re-births, accompanied by pleasure and lust, finding its delight here and there. (This thirst is threefold), namely, thirst for pleasure, thirst for existence, thirst for prosperity.[2]

'This, O Bhikkhus, is the noble truth of the Cessation of suffering: (it ceases with) the complete cessation of this thirst—a cessation which consists in the absence of every passion—with the abandoning of this thirst; with the doing away with it, with the deliverance from it, with the destruction of desire.

'This, O Bhikkhus, is the noble truth of the Path which leads to the cessation of suffering; that holy

[1] On this Eightfold Path, often mentioned, but seldom or never worked out further, see p. 130.

[2] Or, according to a rendering of the word which is preferred by the Sinhalese: 'thirst of annihilation.' This some interpret 'desire for what is unattainable—cessation of existence at the end of the present life, not by Nirvána, but by ordinary death.' But see p. 118 *n*.

Eightfold Path[1]—that is to say, right belief, right aim, right speech, right conduct, right livelihood, right endeavour, right recollectedness, right meditation.

'The first principle, the fact of suffering, must be *understood*; the cause, desire, must be *abandoned*; the third principle, that of the cessation of suffering by the cessation of the cause, must be *seen face to face*, the Path must be *practically realised*.

'Now these things,' said Gotama, 'I have done; I have realised these truths and passed along this path. When I knew myself to have done so, I knew that I was free; that my freedom could never be lost;[2] that this is my last birth; that I cannot be born again.'

The five monks were delighted; and one of them, Kondañña, gained at once a clear view of the principle that, 'whatever has a beginning tends necessarily to an end.' The lower deities of the earth shouted in applause, 'The kingdom of truth has been founded;' the four great deities and all their train shouted. The shout was passed on from one world of divine beings to another, till it reached the Brahma world; and then the whole ten thousand worlds were shaken with a mighty shock; and a light, greater than that of the deities, filled the universe.

So was the Wheel of Doctrine set revolving.[3]

[1] Maha Vagga, i. 6. 19-22, *S.B.E.* In the rest of this quotation I have ceased to follow exactly the *Sacred Books of the East*. The two sentences which follow are an abridgment.

[2] Or 'disturbed'?

[3] In this favourite phrase there is probably a union of two allusions. The Wheel had, probably, been long a symbol of doctrine. The Buddhists as-

This discourse (called the Sutta of the Rolling Forth of the Wheel of Doctrine) is not so much an exposition as a concise assertion of the principles of the Buddha. As an event it is famous; and as the first sermon it is often referred to. With the phrase 'Middle Way,' in the meaning which it bears here, we do not meet often in the Pitakas.[1] The Eightfold way is constantly referred to, but very rarely, and never completely, explained.[2] It is in the Four Truths that the kernel of Buddhism is to be found; but they are the statement in a popular form, as I suppose, of the Chain of Causation and of its bearing on life.

At this point ends, in our books, the first section or recitation-portion of the Maha Vagga. The division is, no doubt, made as a rule with a view to the length of the sections, not to their contents; but in the present instance, it corresponds with a well-marked point in the narrative.[3] Thus far the narrative has been, as the reader must have observed, connected, progressive, and uniform in literary tone. It is marked by picturesqueness and simplicity, and by the absence—except for obvious embellishments—

sociated with this the idea of a universal monarch, whose kingdom was symbolised by his royal chariot-wheel rolling throughout the world. I am no lover of sun-myth theories; but I think this latter idea may be traceable to the chariot of the sun.—See Rhys Davids, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 129 *seq*.

[1] In Maj. Nik. 3, an important Sutta, it is identified with the Eightfold Way. It occurs sometimes in the sense of a middle way between assertion and denial of metaphysical dogmas.

[2] See p. 130. The early part of Sut. Nipat. (see especially Nálaka Sutta) is connected with the idea of the Wheel of Doctrine.

[3] The order is thenceforward that of the rules of the Community; and such biographical fragments as occur are introduced without note of time, to account for the promulgation of the rules.

of the improbable. The steps by which the Thinker found himself the centre of a Community have been so far clearly traced.

§ 3. From this point, though not with any sudden transition, the narrative loses these characteristics. The next three recitation-portions have reference to events which must have followed close upon those we have repeated—the conversion of a number of distinguished laymen, and of some women, of a number of fire-worshippers, of the king, and of two chief disciples—but even in these we no longer find the consecutiveness, and the freedom from exaggeration; and from the end of the fourth recitation-portion onwards the narrative order is lost altogether.

Although Tapussa and Bhaḷḷika, the two mendicants who offered the first food to the new Buddha, were the first persons to take refuge in him and his teaching, they were only lay hearers: Kondanna (now called Aññátakondañña, from his recognition of the doctrine) was the first to attain full knowledge, and to be associated with Gotama in his Order. Kondanna was at once received to both steps, initiation and full profession, his application for them being welcomed with the formula, 'Come, mendicants; the doctrine is well spoken: lead the religious life for complete extinction of sorrow.'[1] The rest of the five ascetics were soon converted, and

[1] This formula, expressly welcoming *an applicant*, has been considered parallel to the *call* of Christ's disciples by the words, 'Follow Me.' This is a fair specimen of such parallels.

grasped the fundamental principles, and arrived at complete detachment from desire and from identifying themselves with anything; thus reaching the state of Rahats, or perfect beings, who had no other existence to look forward to, who had indeed (though the phrase has not yet made its appearance in the system) secured Nirvana, already possessed it in a partial sense, and were secure of it in the full sense at death. There was thus a Community of six, and they all Rahats; for Gotama himself was reckoned as one among the rest.[1]

The story of Yasa, which comes next, though it is not part, except incidentally, of the biography of Gotama, deserves to be somewhat fully quoted here, for a peculiar reason. It has been adopted by the later biographers[2] as model for part of their history of Gotama himself. Yasa was a noble youth delicately nurtured, with the extreme of luxury—a palace for each of the seasons, and so on. In the four rainy months, he never stirred from the palace in which he enjoyed the society of a number of female musicians. One night, however, he happened to be restless, and arose and looked into the hall where these ladies were sleeping. The scene revolted him. One had her hair in disorder; another had spittle flowing from her mouth; others were

[1] Maha Vagga, i. 6 *fin.*

[2] Játaka Commentary, Lalita Vistara, Bigandet, *Life of Gaudama*, referred to by Rhys Davids here; and see Arnold's *Light of Asia*, p. 83, a passage, the elaborate sensuousness of which is a remarkable comment on the title 'Lalita Vistara.'

muttering in their sleep; all their charms were gone; it was 'more like a cemetery.' The worthlessness, the dangerousness of their life came home to him: he felt that sacred 'disgust' which is the spring (according to Buddhism) of religious endeavours, and thereupon he left his home and entered on the homeless state. His departure was facilitated by supernatural agencies; the gates of the palace and of the city were opened by no human hand.

Yasa found his way straight to the deer-park, where the Buddha was; and was welcomed by him, and soon grasped the great fundamental principle that whatever has an origin must necessarily tend to decay. His father, coming to seek him, came also under the Buddha's influence, and became a lay disciple, taking 'refuge' in the Buddha, the Doctrine and the Community; while Yasa himself became a full member of the Community, and the seventh Rahat.

This story differs in some significant details from those which preceded it; and is evidently, I think, a later composition. It is full of technical expressions; the instruction given to Yasa is on the conventional lines of instruction to laymen; and a rather irrelevant miracle is performed—the Buddha rendering Yasa invisible while his father is instructed.

The devotion of Yasa was followed by that of four other noblemen, who were converted by precisely the same course. They were followed by fifty more; to all of whom exactly the same instructions were ad-

dressed with exactly the same results. All became Rahats, of whom there were now sixty-one.[1]

The dispersion of the members of the Community—now sixty, besides the Buddha—is next recorded. Using the formula which became the conventional description of his own purpose, he said:—'Go forth, mendicants, on your rounds, for the good of the many; for the welfare of the many; for the good, the gain, and the welfare of gods and men. Let no two go the same way.'[2] Gotama himself took a course of his own. The dispersion of the Community is represented as the cause of a great many men coming from different countries and from great distances to Gotama, to be received into the Community, by the lower and higher stages, of admission and of full profession. The inconvenience of this led to the regulation that the members of the order might themselves, without coming to Gotama, admit new members to the two steps of Pabbajjá (entrance on religious life) and Upasampada (perfect membership); and the exact ceremonies and words to be used were then appointed.

Whether it is due to the importance of this event, or only to accident and the compiler's awkwardness, the chapter which contains this institution of the form of admission is preceded and followed by two passages which narrate, almost in identical terms, a

[1] The wooden dulness of all this is in striking contrast to the variety of the earlier section.

[2] This has been considered parallel to Our Lord's sending the Seventy two by two.

sort of attack of Mara, the adversary, upon the Buddha.[1] Mara approaches him, and says: 'Thou art bound by fetters, and canst not escape me.' Gotama replies: 'I am delivered from all fetters, from all desires; thou art defeated.'

With no more relevance next comes the story of the conversion and admission (in exactly the same form as we have had above) of thirty more rich young men.

The next incident in the book, though there is no note of time to mark its chronological position, is the conversion, after a series of miracles, of a thousand Jaṭilas or Fire-worshipping ascetics. The total number of miracles, or rather the final batch, is summed up, at the end of the passage, as having been three thousand five hundred; but they are easily classed in three groups.

Gotama went to the chief Fire-worshipper's abode, and begged to be allowed to pass the night in the building where the sacred fire was kept. It was with difficulty that he persuaded his host to allow this, because there was a very powerful and poisonous serpent in the chamber. The Buddha, however, assured him that there would be no danger, and entered. During the night the fire-room was seen filled with blaze and smoke. The serpent was sending forth all the fiery influence that he could,

[1] In my opinion, these passages are quite irrelevant, and suggested only by the reference to 'fetters' in M. V. i. 11. 1. The story of the Jatilas also strikes a reader as compiled from a source different from that of the first Bhánavára.

and the Buddha was emitting counter-blaze—that radiance or radiant influence, symbolised by the rays which surround the head of some images of Buddha, to which appeal is still made in the Buddhist chants.[1] In the morning the serpent was found a senseless form, and the mighty power of the Buddha was acknowledged. 'Still,' said the Jatila to himself, 'he is not equal to me.'

The second group into which I divide these miracles touches another field of fable more familiar to Western readers. When the Jatila summoned his guest to breakfast, the Buddha said, 'Go in, I will follow you,' and straightway went to the spot where grows the mighty Jambu tree, which gives name to Jambudvipa (the Indian world), and brought back a fruit of it; and was in the breakfast-room before the Jatila got there. Another time he brought such and such a mystic flower from such and such a heaven.

The third group is trifling. When the Buddha wanted to wash some rags which were to form his robe, a tank to wash them in, a stone to beat them on (here, at least, is a touch of nature only too familiar to dwellers in Indian lands), and other conveniences for washing, were supernaturally provided. And when five hundred of the Fire-worshippers were trying to split five hundred sticks, or to light five hundred fires, and the like, they were supernaturally prevented from doing so, or enabled to succeed, according to

[1] The range of meaning of this word 'tejo,' from 'fire' and 'splendour,' to something very like 'moral influence,' suggests an interesting inquiry.

the will of the Buddha. It is by reckoning the number of these sticks in each case that the number of miracles is made so large.

The sight of these wonders induced the Fire-worshippers, who were in three companies, each led by a great teacher, to betake themselves to the Buddha and join the community of mendicants. To them he is said to have propounded a discourse on 'Burning:' 'Everything is burning; all the objects which strike the sense, and all the processes of sensation are burning with the fire of ignorance, desire, and all other accompaniments of decay and death. The wise man sees this, feels the religious "disgust" for all such objects, and enters the path which leads to freedom from the passions and from rebirth.' This sermon was the means of advancing the one thousand new mendicants from the position of mere members of the Community to that of Rahats.

The next event follows in proper sequence, and is probably in substance historical, however absurd some of the exaggerations which adorn it. The fame of Gotama reached the king of Magadha, King Bimbisára. The report of his fame is expressed in words which recur constantly throughout the sacred books. The majority of those who came to learn of him or to argue with him are represented as being attracted by this same description, which it is therefore worth while to quote (Maha Vagga, I. 22. 2).

'The ascetic Gotama, the Sakyan, having gone out from the Sakyans to a religious life, has come to

Rájagaha, and is dwelling there in the Laṭṭhivana garden, at the Supatiṭṭha shrine. Of this blessed Gotama a glorious fame is come abroad, to this effect: That he is a blessed, perfect, absolute Buddha, of full attainment in knowledge and conduct, in the perfect state of being, knowing all worlds, the unsurpassable trainer of man, the teacher of gods and men, a blessed Buddha: he it is who has seen face to face and fully learnt by his own insight (the nature of) this world of Devas, and Máras, and Brahmas, and the whole population of Brahmans, and ascetics, gods and men, and makes it known;[1] he who proclaims a doctrine lovely in beginning, lovely in midst, lovely in end, with its meaning and its expression, and makes known a religious course in every way complete and pure.'

The king said, as all (in the books) say who hear the great announcement, 'Good is the sight of such like perfect ones' (Rahats). So with twelve myriads of Brahmans and householders (as a rule, householders means cultivators) Bimbisara repaired to the presence of the Buddha; and in due course, the process of instruction and conviction taking place as in former instances, eleven myriads, with the king, obtained complete insight into the principle: 'That all that is formed must be in turn dissolved;' and one myriad enrolled themselves as lay disciples.

The king announced that his wishes were now

[1] I have followed the Commentaries in this sentence. In *S.B.E.* xiii. 136 it is rendered thus: 'He makes known the Truth, which he has understood himself and seen face to face, to this world-system with its devas,' etc.

fulfilled. His great wishes from boyhood had been, first, some day to be a king; next, that an absolute Buddha might come to his kingdom, that he might wait on the Buddha, might hear his preaching, and finally that he might understand it.

Having formally asked to be admitted 'From this day forth, while life shall last, as a follower who has gone for refuge' to the Buddha, the king begged for the honour of entertaining Gotama and his monks the next day. It was graciously granted; and, on the morrow, attended by the thousand monks who had lately been Fire-worshippers, the Buddha entered the royal city. This entrance of Gotama into Rajagaha is a celebrated epoch in Buddhist history, and later writers exhausted the language of oriental hyperbole in describing its magnificence. The Maha Vagga is content with telling us that Sakka, king of the (lower) deities, assumed the form of a Brahman youth, and headed the procession, reciting a few verses in celebration of the event. Bimbisara, to secure the residence of the Buddha near him, made over to him the Bamboo-grove garden, for the use of him and his Community. The form of words he used was the regular formula for such presentations; and the Buddha took occasion from the royal donation to lay down the rule for his Community: 'I allow you to receive the donation of a park.'[1]

[1] The name 'Áráma,' 'park,' is of constant recurrence, and enters into many names of Buddhist properties in Ceylon, as Thupárama, Tissamaháráma, 'Dome Park,' 'Great-Tissa Park,' etc.

King Bimbisara had considerable influence with the Buddha, and it is said that it was upon his suggestion that the institution of Uposatha (Poya days), now one of the most distinctive features of Buddhism, was adopted. It had been previously in use among the professors of other religious systems.[1] This dependence on, and readiness to be moulded by, royal patronage has always been—in Magadha and in Ceylon—a characteristic of Buddhism. It has always thrived best as an 'established religion;' and the eagerness with which any appearance of government patronage is even now caught at is very curious. Buddhism is now the only 'religion' which is in any political sense 'established' in Ceylon.

The great Teacher has now collected a vast crowd of followers about him, has made provision for the continual extension of his Community, and has obtained the patronage of the king. Only one thing remains to provide for the complete organisation of his system—the conversion of the two great disciples, Sáriputta and Mogallána, to whom tradition assigns a part only second to that of the Buddha himself, and who are, in fact, the reputed authors of considerable portions of the 'words of Buddha.'

These two friends were members of a large train of wandering ascetics, who followed a religious leader called Sanjaya. They had agreed together that whichever should first attain to Amata (this word means literally 'immortal,' then immortality, then

[1] Maha Vagga, ii. 1.

ambrosia, the food of immortality, and, in Buddhist language, 'final emancipation from birth') should tell the other. Sariputta happened to fall in with one of Gotama's monks, and was convinced by his dignified and restrained deportment that he must be a saint. He chose a proper time for speaking to him, and said to him, just as the Brahman, who saw Gotama when first he became the Buddha, had said to Gotama, 'Whence have you this bright countenance? Who is your teacher? What is the doctrine you have adopted?' Assaji (for this was the young monk's name) told him who his teacher was, and stated very briefly the general drift, without the detailed expression, of the doctrine; repeated, in fact, to him the favourite lines :—

> Whatever things proceed from a cause,
> Of them the Buddha has stated the cause;
> And what their dissolution is,
> This is what the Great Ascetic teaches.

Sariputta grasped with perfect insight the principle: all that has a beginning must have an end; and thus congratulated him: 'If but that be the doctrine, you have already reached that state where there is no sorrow, the state hitherto unseen . . . [1] through many myriads of ages of the universe.'

Mogallana soon saw in Sariputta's face the same

[1] A word, Abbhatitaṁ, occurs here, which the translators of *Sacred Books* have not translated. It means 'arrived,' and its position in the sentence is awkward. If it is genuine the clause can only be translated, as it is by Professor Oldenberg (*Buddha*, p. 136): 'That which hath not been seen by many myriads of bygone ages hath come near to us.' One is tempted to conjecture 'abbhásitaṁ,' 'unspoken,' or even 'abbhaṇitaṁ.'

proof of clearness and gladness, and asked: 'Have you, then, attained to Amata?' 'I have,' he replied; and told him exactly what he himself had heard from Assaji; and, exactly as he had done, Mogallana recognised the principle. They went together to the Buddha, and as he saw them come, he said, calling them by their common names, not by those which became attached to them in Buddhist usage: 'There come two friends, Kolita and Upatissa; these will be of my disciples the noblest, the happiest pair!' They were admitted, on their own application, to both grades—Pabbajja and Upasampada.

So numerous now were the adherents of the Buddha that the people began to complain: 'Gotama is breaking up family life; he is leading away all Sanjaya's followers. Whom will he take next?' The monks told this to Gotama; but he replied: 'This will soon pass over; reply to their stanza of complaint by this stanza: 'The great heroes, the Tathagatas, lead men by sound doctrine. Who will murmur at the wise who lead men by sound doctrine?'

So the people were convinced, and the complaints soon died away.

§ 4. Here ends that part of the record of Gotama's life which can be called in any sense connected. What remains is only the closing passage—in the Sutta of the Great Decease (or perhaps better, Long Sutta of the Decease) and a few scattered incidents which are reported in no chronological connection as having occurred some time within the long period (of forty-

five years) which the commentaries tell us intervened between the first preaching and the death.

It would naturally have been in the earlier part of this period[1] that Gotama paid the visit to his native place of which we have a brief but somewhat touching account in Maha Vagga, i. 54. In the course of his wanderings he came to Kapilavastu, and went for alms to his father Suddhodana's house. There the lady, the mother[2] of Rahula, said to her boy, This is your father, Rahula, go and ask for your inheritance. The boy obeyed, and addressing his father said, 'Your shadow, reverend sir, is a place of bliss!' His father rose and went out; and the son followed, still crying, 'Give me my inheritance, reverend sir.' Gotama ordered Sariputta to admit the lad (by Pabbajja), and Sariputta, after inquiring what was the proper way of admitting a novice (sámanera), and the rite being duly instituted, admitted Rahula to the Community. Rahula's hair was cut; he was clothed in the yellow robe, and was lost to his family. His grandfather Suddhodana[3] came to the Buddha; and describing his own grief when his two sons, first Gotama himself and then his half-brother Nanda, entered the religious

[1] If the record is consistent it must have been within some seven years of the Bodhi tree, for Rahula was young enough to be the first novice, *i.e.* probably under fourteen. He must have been born before Gotama set out for the homeless life, and in that life Gotama spent at least seven years before he became Buddha.

[2] Gotama's wife is so described, instead of being named, because Rahula became a monk. Her title therefore in the record of the Community was 'Mother of Rahula.' There is nothing more said of her in the Pitakas.

[3] The reader will observe how far the authors of this story are from wishing to magnify the family of Gotama, or attributing any peculiar character to his 'renunciation.' Suddhodana's grief seems to have been greater at Rahula's loss than at that of Gotama.

life, he begged that it might be a rule henceforth that no son should be admitted without his parents' consent. 'Lord,' he said, 'when the blessed one went forth it was no small grief to me, so when Nanda did, very great is it now that Rahula has done so. The love of a son cuts the skin, having cut the skin it cuts the hide, it cuts (in like order) into the flesh, the sinews, the bones, the marrow! It would be well, Lord, if their reverences admitted no son without the consent of his father and his mother.'[1] And the Buddha made it a rule accordingly.

Of incidents said to have occurred in the course of the Buddha's teaching the texts as well as the commentaries are full, since almost every discourse has to be prefaced with some account of the occasion on which it was delivered. In the commentaries and Jataka stories these incidents are numerous and varied, and some of them are interesting; but they do not come within our present scope, since there is no evidence that they were attached to Gotama till many centuries after his death. To this class belong, for instance, the story of his sympathy for the young woman to whom he recommended as a cure for grief some mustard obtained from a family which had suffered no bereavement (*Light of Asia*, p. 124. . . . The story of Kisagotami comes from the Commentary on Dhammapada). The story introductory to a discourse in the Pitaka texts is, as a rule, very short and commonplace, oftenest simply:—'At that time the Buddha

[1] Maha Vagga, i. 54, *S.B.E.*

was dwelling at Savatthi,' or the like. But from among the mass a few incidents may be selected which display traits of character.

There are many which represent Gotama as behaving with generosity to rival teachers and members of alien sects. For instance, when Síha, the Licchavian Commander-in-Chief (Senápati), had been converted, and applied to be received as a disciple, the Buddha said, 'Consider well, Siha, before you act; well-known men like you ought to consider well before they act.' This delighted Siha, and increased his confidence in the Buddha. 'Any of the other sects,' he said, 'if they had got me to join them, would have been carrying banners round all Vesáli, crying, "Siha, the commander-in-chief, has come over to us!"' His admiration culminated when the Buddha said, 'For a long time, Siha, your house has been one in which the Niganthas have always found food, so you should make a point of giving to them when they come on their begging rounds.'[1]

It is almost exclusively among the wealthy and high born that the conversions are recorded, and gigantic are the gifts, especially in the way of cart-loads of food—500 cart-loads of sugar for instance—of which we read. Mendaka, though only a 'householder,' was a donor whose gifts cost him even less than those of the rich merchants and noblemen did to them, for his family possessed extraordinary advantages.

[1] Maha Vagga, vi. 31. 11, *S.B.E.*

He himself had the gift of being able, if he bathed his head and sat down by his granary, to fill it by making showers of grain fall from the sky; his wife had only to sit down by a dish to ensure its being filled with an inexhaustible supply; their son had an inexhaustible money-bag, and their daughter-in-law a rice-bag of similar qualities. It was a small thing for such a man to supply 1250 cows, each with her keeper, to supply the 1250 monks with fresh milk continually.[1]

On another occasion, a devout woman who could get no meat for a sick monk, when meat was particularly necessary for him, secretly cut off a piece of her own flesh to send him; and, although this led to a stringent order forbidding the eating of human flesh, her wound was healed by the Buddha.[2]

Among the innumerable gifts which Buddha and the community accepted, were several of parks, like that which Bimbisara had presented at Benares. Of these the most celebrated is the Jetavana, near Savatthi, which was the gift of Anáthapiṇḍika, the prince and model of all donors. The conversion of this person, and the circumstances of his great donation are related with unusual distinction.[3] He was the brother-in-law of the treasurer of Rajagaha, and the first intimation he received of the existence of a Buddha in the world, was derived from the excitement in which, on a certain day, he found his relative and all his house. 'Have you a wedding going on, or is the king coming?' he asked. 'No,' replied

[1] Maha Vagga, vi. 34. [2] Maha Vagga, vi. 23. [3] Culla Vagga, vi. 4.

the treasurer, 'the Buddha is coming with his Community to eat at my house.' Hardly able to believe that he had been so happy as to have been born in a Buddha's days, Anathapindika determined to go the next morning to visit Gotama. Celestial beings opened the gates for him. Supernatural voices encouraged him, and strange alternations of light and darkness excited his expectations. He was received with unusual solemnity, and with some striking verses from the Buddha's lips, and was instructed and enlightened in the usual method. He invited the Buddha to take a meal with him on the morrow, and the invitation was accepted. The treasurer, the mayor, and the king all offered to assist him in providing the entertainment, but he declined their offers. The meal passed off as usual, but at the end of it, Anathapindika invited the Buddha to spend the rainy season at Savatthi. Gotama replied, 'The Tathagathas love solitude.' This was an intimation that a park would be required. Anathapindika made search in every direction, and decided that a garden belonging to a certain prince Jeta was exactly what was wanted, accessible but not crowded or exposed. But it was not to be bought for less than such a number of pieces of gold as would cover its surface. The price was paid—though not accepted without reluctance on the seller's part;—the gold was brought in carts and the Jetavana was covered with coins. Dwellings and halls of every kind, baths and bathing tanks were

erected, and the park was handed over to the Buddha and the Community; as may still be seen and read in a bas-relief of the Bharhut Tope (erected probably B.C. 200—150) which is figured in Cunningham's *Stupa of Bharhut*, plate lvii., and of which there is a model in the museum at Calcutta.

The influence of Gotama's personal attraction and kindness is everywhere implied in the record. In a few cases attention is drawn to it, as when it is said of Roga the Mallian, that Gotama—on the suggestion of Ananda that this Roga was an important person to secure—poured out such an effluence of love upon him, that he could not but follow the teacher as a calf (follows the cow).[1] This exertion of influence was confessedly dictated by policy, but the mention of it shows what was the tradition about Gotama's attractive power.

Otherwise there are not recorded in the early parts of the Pitakas, as far as I know, any special acts of kindness on the Buddha's part, with one beautiful exception. A monk was very ill, and neglected by the other monks, both because he was —as he said—of no use to them, and, as is evident from the story, because his condition was repulsive. Then the Buddha said to Ananda, 'Fetch some water, you and I will bathe this monk.' The Buddha poured the water over him, and Ananda wiped him; the Buddha lifted his head and Ananda his feet, and so they laid him on his bed.

[1] Maha Vagga, vi. 36.

The terms in which the Buddha rebuked the monks for their neglect, and the last words of the sentence I am about to quote, reach higher, I think, than anything else in the Pitakas, into the levels of Christian teaching. 'You monks have no mothers and no fathers to wait on you. If you do not wait on one another, who will wait on you? *Whosoever would wait on me, let him wait upon the sick.*'[1]

A Christian can only rejoice to quote such a passage as this, and heartily congratulate his Buddhist friends upon it, and invite them to follow it.[2]

We have seen that the two chief disciples, Sariputta and Mogallana, were brought upon the scene with a careful record of the circumstances of their conversion; but this is not the case with others. The later Pitaka books contain classified lists of the monks (and nuns) who were distinguished in various ways; but there is nothing of this sort attempted in the Vinaya. Here a great part of the traditional history of the religion is evidently taken for granted. Persons who were among the chief in importance are brought upon the scene without introduction. For instance, a very prominent figure in the story is that of Ananda; but the occasion of his conversion is not recorded. He is said (in the commentaries) to have been a cousin of Gotama, and we find him,

[1] Maha Vagga, viii. 26. 3.

[2] At present, I feel bound to say, the degree to which the Buddhists of Ceylon —speaking generally—are destitute of the character here attributed to their Founder, is shocking, and all but incredible to persons who have lived only in Christian countries.

from first to last, in the closest attendance on the Buddha. He nurses him in sickness; is often consulted about his movements; is the medium of many of his communications with monks and laymen. While others are represented as more learned and of higher attainment—in fact, Ananda, according to the tradition, was one of the last to become a Rahat—none were so near to the person and affections of the leader.

Another important personage was the guilty Devadatta. It would be possible, I think, almost with exactness to trace, within the Pitaka books themselves, the growth of the tradition about this person. In the Maha Vagga he is mentioned only once, as having been the occasion, by reciting the Form of Confession in the presence of laymen, of a rule forbidding such a practice. But in the Culla Vagga, a second part of the history of the Rule, Devadatta's crimes are narrated in great detail. He had acquired, in former births, a great amount of merit, and in this life was far advanced in Buddhistic attainments, and a great master of supernatural powers. But pride and honours were too much for him; he coveted the first place, and set to work to obtain it. He cultivated the friendship of Ajâtasattu, the young son of King Bimbisara, and aroused in him the same envy against his father the king, as he himself indulged against the Buddha.[1] 'You kill your father and be king, and I will kill Gotama and be Buddha.' The

[1] Culla Vagga, vii. 2.

young prince's attempt to murder his father was happily discovered and averted for the while (though he carried out his evil purpose later), and the king, acting on true Buddhist principles, voluntarily surrendered the kingdom to him. Devadatta persisted in his attacks on Gotama, once sending men to kill him, who, instead of killing him were subdued and converted by his influence; once hurling down a rock, which failed to strike him, but brought on Devadatta the greatest of all possible guilts, that of shedding a Buddha's blood; for a splinter of the fallen rock pierced the Buddha's foot. Foiled in these attempts, he set to work to introduce dissension into the Community, and for this purpose invented five points of greater strictness than the existing rules required. He persuaded a good many monks, Vajjians of Vesali,[1] to support him in demanding of the Buddha that these five points should be made rules. On the Gotama's refusing this, he led away a train of 500 monks, who were soon however induced to return by the preaching of Sariputta. Devadatta was most generously treated by Gotama, and warned again and again; but when he persisted in his determination to divide the Community, his doom was solemnly predicted.

Several references to Devadatta may be gathered from other parts of the Pitaka, but they are all in obvious reference to the account already summarised. The Prince Abhaya was stirred up by Nátaputta to tax Gotama with having used unkind language about

[1] See Chapter xxi. p. 297.

Devadatta, calling him 'damned,' 'doomed to hell for a Kalpa,' 'past cure,' and the like; and the Buddha explained that a word which is true, and intended to do good, though it give pain, is right. The condemnation was uttered out of the Buddha's compassion for all beings.[1]

It is as an illustration of the horrible evils of schism, and of the great dangers which arise from being praised and made much of, that Devadatta's story is elaborated; and all the references to him, except the first, belong to the later portion of the Pitaka cycle of traditions. They lead us, therefore, fitly on to the concluding portion of the biography we are constructing—which is to be found in something like a chronological order in the Sutta of the Parinibbana or Decease of the Buddha. For the mind of the compiler of that Sutta was evidently occupied with the thought of dissensions and schisms, and the desire to prevent or heal them. He has brought together a variety of topics, but this is the dominant one. His aim has been—with certain special reference, as I believe, to the circumstances of his own time—to represent the last thoughts of the Buddha as having been directed to the great purpose of unity.

§ 5. The throne of Magadha was occupied in these later days of Gotama's life by Ajatasattu.

[1] Maj. Nik. 58. In Sanyut. Nik. vi. 2. 2 the favourite verse 'Phalaṁ ve,' etc., is quoted; and in Angut. iv. 68, it is quoted and explained. So in Sanyut. xvii. 35. All these turn on words which occur in the Culla Vagga passage.

This monarch was anxious to overcome the Vajjians, and sent his minister to inquire of the Buddha whether he would succeed or not in his enterprise. The Buddha turned to Ananda and asked whether the Vajjians were in the habit of meeting in large numbers; whether they met and acted in unity; whether they were keeping their laws and making no innovations in them; whether they honoured the old; whether their women were well conducted; whether they were keeping in repair and treating with reverence the shrines which existed in their country; and, finally, whether they were maintaining due provision for the comfortable support of the Buddhist saints (rahats) in their country. To all these Ananda replied in the affirmative; and then the Buddha told the minister, that as long as these seven conditions of prosperity continued, the Vajjians would prosper. The minister went away with little hope of success; and the Buddha soon afterwards summoned his monks together to give them a corresponding instruction as to the conditions on which the permanent prosperity of the Community depended. In five sets of seven and one set of six, these conditions of permanence are stated, and they embrace—in no very logical order—nearly all the leading principles of Buddhism. It is not difficult to see that the first set of seven, which really corresponds to the seven qualities commended in the Vajjians, forms the original part of this collection of forty-one, and that the other thirty-four are later additions.

Then follows a curious account of Gotama's rebuking Ananda for a rash compliment. Ananda had professed his conviction that there never had been, nor ever would be, any one greater or wiser in absolute knowledge than Gotama. 'Brave words, Ananda; but can you see into the minds of all past and future Buddhas, and estimate exactly their characters and powers? Can you see into me, the Buddha of the present?' Poor Ananda admitted that he had none of these powers; and that all he was entitled to assert was that all Buddhas, past and present, must have obtained Buddhahood by the same course of extinction of lust, and of active self-training, by which Gotama had attained it.

The Sutta has next some sections which are in the main identical, though with some differences of arrangement, with certain sections which I passed unnoticed in the Maha Vagga. One of these is particularly important as possibly affording a means of ascertaining the date—or at least the relative date—at which the Pitakas were compiled.

Sunídha and Vassakára, the chief ministers of Magadha, in view of the war with the Vajjians, were building a city at Pátaligáma.[1] It was a spot haunted by thousands of those local deities which haunt trees, ponds, houses and the like, and (as the Buddha saw, though no one else did) the Magadhan authori-

[1] Parinibb. p. 12: Pātaligámaṁ nagaraṁ mápenti. Rhys Davids translates, 'fortifying Pātaligáma'; but my translation is, I think, more correct, as implying that there was as yet no city there, it was a Gáma or country district.

ties were in unconscious but auspicious sympathy with (what a later phraseology would call) the genius of the place. Where the local deities of highest power haunted, there the mightiest nobles were planning their dwellings, where the deities were of those medium or of lower dignity, there Maghadans of corresponding rank were settling. The Buddha revealed this auspicious fact to Ananda, and said, 'It is as if the Magadhan ministers had taken counsel with the Távatinsa gods. Of all the dwellings of noble men, of all places of traffic, this will be the chief city; Pataliputta, the central town. But there will be three dangers for Pataliputta, from fire, or from water, or from breach of friendship.'

The Buddha was of course entertained there, and he is represented as having expressed his satisfaction in some lines[1] which inculcate the culture of local deities in a way inconsistent with the strictest Buddhism, and which indeed belong to the region of the astrologer and the house charmer:—

'In what spot soever the wise man takes up his abode,
There let him give food to good and self-controlled men of religion:
To the deities that belong there let him give an offering:
Thus served they will serve him, honoured they will honour him;
So dealt with, they feel for him as a mother for her own dear son:
He always sees good luck whom the local deities love.'

[1] Which in an earlier text, I think, might have been called 'Anacchariyá.'—See Rhys Davids' notes (*S. B. E.* xi. p. 19 and p. 20). There is no reason for shrinking from saying that many stanzas which have been pressed into the service of Buddhism are thoroughly alien in spirit.

And the builders of the city resolved that the gate by which the Buddha went out should be called the Gotama gate, and the crossing at which he should cross the Ganges should be called the Gotama ferry. He did not cross, however, by the ferry, for the river was full; but miraculously disappeared from the one side and stood, with his train of monks, on the other.[1]

Many a comprehensive discourse was uttered as the Buddha went from place to place in the neighbourhood of Vesali; but it was after he had entered on the retirement of the rainy season at Beluva, near that city, that the symptoms of his approaching end appeared. He became very ill, and suffered much, but he would not pass away till he had bidden his monks farewell.[2] So by an effort of will he turned back the sickness, and retained his hold on life. On his recovery, Ananda asked for some last instructions. The reply is very striking.

'What is it the Community expects of me? I have preached the doctrine, making no distinction of inner and outer, the Buddha has not reserved therein the teacher's perquisite.[3] Should any one thus think, Ananda, "I will be the leader of the Community of monks," or "the Community is dependent upon me," I suppose he, Ananda, must lay down rules on any point concerning the Community! This has never been

[1] Mahaparinibb. S., p. 14. [2] Mahaparinibb. S., p. 21.

[3] A proverbial expression for some point of skill or science kept back, that the teacher might still be superior to his pupil.

my (the Tathagata's) thought; "I lead the Community, the Community depends on me." How should I lay down rules on any point for the Community? I am now worn, outgrown, old, aged, far on in years; my age is going on for eighty. Just as a worn-out cart, Ananda, can get along only with all sorts of patching and care,[1] so methinks it is only with patching and care that my body gets along. When the Tathagata by abstraction from all marks of outward objects, by the extinction of certain sensations, lives in the attainment of that freedom of mind which consists in noting nothing, then only is the Tathagatha's body kept at ease. Therefore, I say, Ananda, be yourselves your lamp, yourselves your refuge, have no other refuge; have the doctrine for your light, have the doctrine for your refuge, have no other refuge. How can this be?

'Let us suppose a monk so lives,—with so true an estimate of the body, as to be in bodily things austere, attentive, recollected, and to subdue all pain of craving; so true an estimate of sensation, as to be in regard of sensations austere, attentive, recollected, and to subdue all sense of pain; so true an estimate of thought, as to be in regard of thoughts austere, attentive, recollected, and to subdue all thoughts of pain; then a monk lives his own lamp, his own refuge, with no other refuge; with the doctrine for his lamp and for his refuge, and with no other refuge. And whoever either now or after my death shall so

[1] Veghamissakena.

live, they will be in the highest place among those who are lovers of the Rule.'

After this the Buddha is recorded to have deliberately resolved on dying in three months' time. He might, with such powers as he had acquired, have prolonged his life—so he reflected—for a cycle or for the rest of the current cycle of time; and Ananda, on hearing his reflections, entreated him to do so; for Mara was besetting Ananda's mind. And soon Mara approached in person, and reminded the Buddha of words he had before spoken—at the very beginning of his Buddhahood, as is afterwards explained—announcing his resolve not to enter on his final extinction till he had fully preached his doctrine. 'Now,' cried the enemy, 'all that has been done; disciples, monks and nuns, lay men and lay women, have been trained, who can teach and explain the doctrine to others, etc. Let the Blessed One therefore enter on his final extinction.'

'Be at ease, wicked one,' replied the Buddha, 'the Tathagata's final extinction is not far distant, at the end of three months the Tathagata will enter on final extinction.' This solemn renunciation was marked by a mighty earthquake, such as occurs—we here learn—only on eight occasions: viz., by natural causes, by the supernatural power of meditation in some unusually wise sage, Brahman or Buddhist, or of some deity higher or lower, and on the occasions of a Buddha's conception, his birth, his attainment of Buddhahood, his setting in motion the royal wheel

of the law, his deliberate renunciation of life, and lastly his actual final and utter passing away from existence.[1]

Ananda tried in vain to persuade his master to remain for the rest of the cycle; but he was reminded—and the information must have been as mortifying to Ananda as it is strange to us—that this was not the first time that he had had the opportunity of urging such a request. Again and again, in various scenes, the Buddha had given him a very strong hint by saying, 'One of my power could easily, if he liked, remain in life all the cycle;' and on either of these occasions, had Ananda taken the hint and begged the Buddha to stay in life, he would have consented! So it is Ananda, it seems, by his dulness about taking a hint, who has prevented our having the son of Suddhodana still among us!

In due time the Buddha arrived with Ananda at the Kútágára hall, and preparations were immediately made for assembling all the monks of the Vesali district (or province, Símáwa). He addressed them in an earnest though very technical sermon, insisting on the great heads of his system as essential to the permanence of religion, and to the good and happiness of gods and men. He ended with the words, 'Behold now, monks, I impress it upon you; all (composite) things are subject to the law of dissolution; press on earnestly to perfection; soon

[1] This set of eight earthquakes leads the compiler to introduce, quite irrelevantly, two lists of eight stages of the higher meditation.

the Tathagata's final extinction will take place; at the end of three months the Tathagata will enter on final extinction.' Or, as the versified form of the story expresses it:—

'Full ripe is my age, little of my life remains,
I shall leave you and go,—I have made myself my own refuge;
Be untiring, be recollected, and keep to the rules of conduct;
Let your resolution be firmly held, guard your thoughts well;
Whoso in this doctrine and rule untiringly toils on,
Shall leave the ocean of repeated births and make an end of sorrow.'

In leaving Vesali, Gotama turned slowly and deliberately as an elephant does, and took a solemn last look at the city, and went on from place to place giving various instructions. One of these is very significant as an indication of the relative date of the Sutta in which it occurs. He addressed the monks on the method of testing or verifying doctrine. Whether a particular doctrine be asserted by a single monk who professes to be reporting what he actually heard the Buddha say, or whether it be the tradition of a particular monastery or district, or that of one, or of many very learned elders, there is but one test. The sentences and syllables of the dogma under discussion are to be carefully taken and placed beside the sacred text and compared with the rule.[1] If they do not

[1] Parinibb. S., 39. The words are Sutta and Vinaya, the names of the two collections afterwards called Pitakas. The 'learned' elders above are described as 'bahussutá,'—'full of tradition' (smriti), and 'vinayadhárá,' 'carrying about with them the rule' (vinaya), and mátikadhárá, 'knowing by heart the mátikápadáni,' the 'summaries' of doctrine, etc., and lists of abridged rules. All these expressions refer evidently to a fully compiled and classified 'text' (and almost certainly to a written one), and mark the late date of the Maha-parinibb. S.

stand with the text and bear comparison with the rule, then it follows that such a dogma is certainly not the word of the Buddha,—it is that monk's mistake (and so conversely).

This important passage is succeeded by a more strictly narrative (and I doubt not, far more ancient) portion of the Sutta.[1] Gotama and Ananda went on to Pává, and were the guests there, with others of the Community, of Cunda the smith. Besides the other 'hard and soft foods,' cakes and curry and rice, Cunda had provided a quantity of dried pork. The Buddha at once perceived that this pork was not likely to be safely eaten by any one, of all gods and men, except a Buddha. He made his own meal upon it, but ordered what remained to be buried in a hole. (The next paragraph I translate quite literally for the reason given in the note.)[2] 'So when the Bhagavat had eaten the food of Cunda the smith, there arose in him a fierce disease of the nature of

[1] The sections marked iv. 14–23 and 53–58 (M. P. S. pp. 41 *seq.*, and 47, etc.) are founded on an old metrical narrative, probably the same as that of which fragments appear in the first book of the Maha Vagga. These sections are free from the interspersion of elaborate doctrinal passages.

[2] Here are three versions side by side, (1) the prose of the compiler, which is only a prose arrangement of (2), a nearly contemporary 'sloka,' and (3) the earlier and quainter Trishtubh stanza, differing in several phrases from (2). In (3) there is no allusion to the fortitude with which the pain was borne, which is developed in (1). Nor is there, according to my translation, in (2). But Rhys Davids translates the second line of (2) thus:—

> 'He bore with fortitude the pain
> The sharp pain even unto death!'

This is due, I think, to an oversight. *Samphusi* means 'felt' or 'felt much,' and 'dhíro' is a common title of the Buddha, which may be translated either 'brave' or 'wise.'

dysentery, violent pains go on, such as lead to death. These pains, however, the Bhagavat, in conscious recollectedness, accepted without complaint. 'Let us go, Ananda, to Kusinára.' The venerable Ananda assented, saying, 'Even so, my lord!'

Or thus :—

'When he had eaten the food of Cunda the smith (so I have heard)
The wise one experienced a disease, violent, such as leads to death.'

Or thus :—

'When he had eaten the dried pork,
Violent illness arose in the Teacher :
The Bhagavat suffered violent purgings, and said,
I will go to the city of Kusinara.'

Here follows a trifling episode which led to the Buddha's giving an account of his own calm and self-concentration, such that a furious storm had taken place around him without his noticing it. The next section tells us of his being robed in a set of robes of cloth of gold, the gift of a new adherent, the splendour of which was outshone by the brilliance of the Buddha's skin. For as the day of his decease approaches, the same phenomenon occurs as at the time of his acquiring Buddahood : his complexion becomes pure and lustrous.[1]

Then the old narrative is resumed, and although

[1] The expression is the same as in former places, where the same is said of Gotama, of Assaji, of Sáriputta and others ; but what was told simply in the Maha Vagga is here treated as a regular miracle. It was developed later into a sort of 'transfiguration.'—See Rhys Davids' note, *S. B. E.* xi. 82.

it is given also in prose, we may quote the metrical version :[1]—

'On Buddha went, on to Kakuttha river,
Fair flowed the white water and clear and pleasant,
Down thither stepped weary and worn the Teacher,
Great, peerless one, Tathagata, chief of beings!
The Teacher bathed, he drank and he crossed the river,
He first and chief, followed by all the brethren.
Still setting forth doctrine, the Blessed Teacher,
The mighty Sage, came to the Mango-Garden.
Then straight the monk, Cundaka[2] named, he summon'd,
"Fold now a robe fourfold and spread it 'neath me."
Straight Cunda heard the voice of the self-controll'd one,
Fourfold in haste folded a robe and laid it:
Down lay the great Teacher, so worn and weary,
While Cunda sat down on the ground before him.'

Some confusion between this monk Cunda and Cunda the smith has led to the insertion here of a considerate message, left by the Buddha with Ananda for the comfort of Cunda, if the latter should feel remorse at the thought that the food he gave had been followed by the Buddha's extinction. Ananda was to assure him, as from the Buddha's own lips, that this offering of Cunda's, and that first offering of food made on his own attainment of Buddahood, were the two most meritorious of all offerings. The result of that action of Cunda's would lead to long life, to beauty, to happiness, to glory, to heaven, to sovereign power.

[1] Corresponding to (3) in the instance referred to in p. 76, n. 2, and very probably continuous with that passage. I have rendered it baldly enough, but into a metre which fairly represents the original.

[2] This cannot be the same person as Cunda the smith, but there may be some explanation which has not reached us, of the coincidence of the names.

The next stage of the journey was the last. With a great train of monks the Buddha went to the Sála Grove, where, between a pair of Sala trees in every respect alike, the couch was spread, and the Buddha lay down with his head to the north, reclining on his right side, with full consciousness and recollectedness, in a lion-like repose.

At this moment the Sala trees burst into unexpected bloom, the heavens rained flowers upon the hero's form, and heavenly music was wafted from the skies. But such signs of honour as these, said the Buddha, are not the true honour of a Tathagata. Rather, he said, the monk or nun, lay man or lay woman, who lives in the performance of all the duties and ways of religion, such a one pays him the true, the higher honour and service.

Unseen spirits were now crowding the air to get a sight of the great Being,—not the space of a pin-point for twelve leagues round but was full of deities, —some ready to tear their hair in vulgar grief, but some clear-sighted enough to see that 'all things are unabiding,' and to acquiesce in what is inevitable.

Under the twin Sala trees, before the last moment came, several incidents and discourses of very unequal interest are recorded as having found place. Some are mere heterogeneous notices of rules; some are important summaries of doctrine; but two classes only will be mentioned now, those which are really part of

Gotama's biography,[1] and those which have a historical interest.[2]

Ananda is a very well marked character, and always wins our sympathy. He was rather slow, as we have seen; during all his master's life he failed to attain rahatship; but his patient affection and gentleness are very attractive. One is glad to find him appreciated. While Gotama reclined between the Sala trees, Ananda withdrew, and stood leaning against some doorway, and wept at the thought, that his kind master was so soon to pass away, and he still a learner! Gotama sent for him, and comforted him, and uttered in three parallel sentences these touching words: 'A long time, Ananda, you have followed and served me with acts of love, with words of love, with thoughts of love, kind, blessed, unvarying, immeasurable.' And then he spoke at length to the monks in praise of Ananda, comparing him, for the graciousness of his manners, to a universal monarch.[3] But poor Ananda was immediately to give another proof of the limited range of his powers. He tried to dissuade the Buddha from accomplishing his extinction in the insignificant little town of Kusinara. Let him go and end his life rather in some great city, Rajagaha or Benares. The Buddha rebuked him;

[1] Biographical. Ananda's comfort and his praise. The suggestion that Gotama should not die in Kusinara. The Mallians told. Subhaddha's conversion. Last warnings (vi. 1) and inquiries, the last words: the way of decease.

[2] Historical directions are given about the four pilgrimages, the burial of Emperors and Buddhas, and the erection of dagobas; which all show the late date of the Sutta.

[3] Cakkavatti, *cf.* chapter XX. p. 280.

Kusinara must not be called an insignificant town; ages ago it had been the royal city of the great Mahá Sudassana (the ideal king),[1] and had been adorned with every element of (the conventional description of) wealth and splendour. Ananda was then sent to prepare the nobles of Kusinara for what was to take place; and they came full of grief, and were presented, family by family, to the Buddha. The news of the approaching end decided a certain Subhadda, a religious person of great attainments and importance but not yet a Buddhist, to come and inquire of the Buddha, and he was soon converted and became a rahat, the last disciple gained by Gotama himself.

Little more remained to be done. Three times Gotama called on his monks, if there were any point on which any one of them had yet any doubt, now while he was yet with them to ask about it. Not one had a point to raise. And the Buddha asserted the conclusion, that there was not one in the whole Community in whose mind one doubt existed in regard to the Buddha, the Doctrine, or the Order, the Way or the Path: the last of the 500 had at least entered indefectibly on the path which must lead him at last to perfect insight.

Then the Blessed One said to the monks, 'Behold now, mendicants, I say to you, everything is subject to decay, press forward untiringly to perfec-

[1] A very famous Sutta, translated in *S. B. E.* vol. xi., describes the glory of this monarch and his city.

tion.' This was his last word. He then entered into the first stage of meditation, thence into the second, the third, the fourth; from the fourth stage of meditation he proceeded to the realm of the infinity of space, thence to that of the infinity of thought, and so into the realm of nothingness, then into that of neither consciousness nor unconsciousness, and thence into that in which all action of either thought or perception is at an end.

Ananda, the simple-minded, thought all was over, but Anuruddha, the great metaphysician of the Community, said, 'Nay, brother Ananda, this is not full Nirvana; he has entered that state in which all action of either thought or perception is at an end.'

Nirvana it appears is not the culmination of abstraction. The Buddha retraced his course through all these stages of exalted meditation, step by step to the fourth, the third, the second, the first; and in the moment of issuing from the first stage of meditation, the Blessed One became extinct.

The event was accompanied by a fearful and terrible earthquake, and by suitable reflections from beings of every grade. The supreme Brahma uttered a stanza which was hardly worthy of the occasion; at any rate it was far surpassed in conciseness and in celebrity by that of Sakra, the leader of the gods:—

'All things[1] are unabiding,
Birth, death,—their law is this:
They come to birth; they perish,—
End all, and *that* is bliss!'

The utterance of the metaphysician Anuruddha was more definitely an epitaph:—

'There came no strife of gasping breath from that strong heart and stedfast will:
All longing past, all calm attain'd, did that high sage his date fulfil;
Accepted willingly the pain, with heart unmov'd and mind at peace;
As some bright flame[2] extinguish'd fades, so came to him the glad release.'

The verse attributed to Ananda almost overdoes his character for simplicity:—

'Moment of terror! moment of thrilling awe!
When glorious Buddha, rich in every grace,
In final dissolution pass'd away!'

Men and deities alike, each according to his own degree of detachment from desire, received the news with bitter emotion or philosophic calm, and Anuruddha especially reminded the brethren how the departed had prepared them to recognise the law of separation and dissolution. And in such converse the night was spent.

For six days the preparations for the burning, which had been intrusted to the Mallian nobles of

[1] The word sankhárá implies 'compound,' and suggests the argument which is at the base of the statement, viz., that what has been formed by putting elements together is liable to be destroyed by their separation; the rendering 'things' is therefore inadequate. On the other hand, since 'sankhárá' includes all objects, no other word than 'things' is large enough.

[2] Perhaps the participle 'pajjotassa' implies, 'as what has been kindled is liable to extinction.'

Kusinara, were carried on with acts of homage to the corpse, with dances, music and flowers and decorations; and on the seventh day, with every sign of honour, borne by eight chieftains of the Mallians, the corpse was taken—not, as was first thought of, and as would have been usual, around the outside of the city, but, according to a divine intimation, through the very midst of the city—to a spot upon the east of it where the cremation was to be. No pollution could be caused by such a corpse; on the contrary all Kusinara was knee-deep in the flowers which were showered from heaven, to strew the way of the auspicious procession.

In accordance with an idea which we have already met with more than once in this narrative, the remains of the Buddha were treated, as Ananda directed, like those of a universal monarch (cakkavatti). The body was wrapped first in a new cloth, then in cotton wool, then in another new cloth, and so on till it had been wrapped in 500 such double wrappings. It was then placed in an iron oil vessel, and this was enclosed in another iron vessel. They then made a mound of all kinds of perfumes, and laid thereon the body of the Buddha. When the 500 monks had assembled, they walked three times round the pyre, and did homage at the feet of the Buddha; and thereupon the pyre took fire. Every particle of the body, except the bones, having been burnt, and not an ash remaining, rain fell from heaven and waters burst up from beneath the earth, and so the pyre

was quenched, while the Mallians added perfumed waters.

They then placed the bones in their council-hall, and made a lattice-work of spears and a rampart of bows[1] around them; and for seven days with dance and song, and music and flowers, and perfumes, did honours and homage and reverent service.

To obtain a portion of the relics and erect in the honour of the Buddha a shrine, or stúpa,—such probably as is now called in Ceylon a 'dágoba' or 'relic-holder,'—was now the ambition of all who could claim to do so.

Gotama had belonged to the Kshatriya or royal (or warrior) caste; so first the King Ajatasattu, and then the Licchavian nobles of Vesali, and then the Sakyans of Kapilavastu, and three other clans, and with these one Brahman, of Vethadípa—seven claims in all—asserted their respective claims to a share in the bodily remains, and to the right of erecting a dagoba over them. But the Mallians of Kusinara were unwilling to part with their possession till a Brahman named Dona[2] came forward as peace-makers, and divided the relics into eight portions, keeping for himself the vase (in which they had been collected). This Brahman by caste was of course a Buddhist by religion, and the story of his intervention evidently formed part of the older tradition. It is recorded in simple verse:—

[1] A Scythian custom?

[2] There is something suspicious abont this name, as Dona (the Drona of the Mahabharata) is rather like Doni, a relic vessel.

'Hear, rev'rend sirs! only a word I offer:
Our Buddha dear taught us a law of meekness.
Ill were it if over the distribution
Of *his* remains strife should arise and warfare!
Come, rev'rend sirs! let us, in love and concord
Sweetly agreed, make of them eight divisions:
Wide be the shrines distributed through the regions,
And many men won to the faith of Buddha.'

One other Kshatriya clan put in a claim after the distribution, but it was too late.[1]

NOTE.—INDICATIONS OF AN ANCIENT METRICAL LIFE OF GOTAMA.

There is reason to think that the oldest tradition of the life of Gotama was handed down in a continuous poem, in Trishtubh metre, of the form Gantvána Buddho nadiyaṁ Kakutthaṁ; fragments of which have come down to us, imbedded in the prose narrative.

This metre has peculiar claims to be considered ancient (Dr. Oldenberg has remarked on the antiquity of the passage from which I have quoted a line,[2] and it is particularly associated with the biographical notices of the Buddha.

[1] Two incidents, omitted above, deserve a passing reference,—the parts played respectively by Mahakassapa and by Subhadda. Mahakassapa was at a distance when the tidings reached him,—reached him by his seeing some one carrying one of the celestial flowers which had fallen in Kusinárá,—and a supernatural intimation was given to the Mallians that the cremation should be delayed till he arrived. Subhadda was a far less loyal disciple. He had been but a little while admitted, and his disloyal words were the one exception to the pious tone which prevailed round the Buddha's tomb. He said, in effect: Why should we be sorry? we are rid of a strict master; now we can make what rules we like. It was this remark of Subhadda's, we find from the Culla Vagga, which led to the determination of the 500 monks to meet and formulate all the Buddha's words without delay, and it was Mahakassapa who presided at their assembly. But of that assembly the Sutta says nothing.

[2] I have translated it, preserving the metre, on p. 78.

A.—The metre is ancient.

(1.) It is closely allied to the Greek and Latin sapphic and hendecasyllabic.

(2.) Passages in it contain a large proportion of the old grammatical forms and old words, such as 'have,' 'brúhi,' etc.

(3.) They contain prosodiacal peculiarities, some of which, from their affinity to old Latin prosody, I believe to be old, *e.g.*, the quantity of *o* common, and the (1) omission and (2) elision of *m*.

There are of course late verses in this metre, which was a favourite one (though the later ones are not so well written), as there are ancient verses in other metres (both in sloka and in other forms of Trishtubh); but I do not think any other metrical passages can be so distinctly identified as ancient, as those which, being in this metre, bear the other marks of age.

B.—It is used in biographical passages.

(*a.*) Out of about fourteen instances of this metre in the Vinaya Pitaka, seven are in the biographical four first *bhanavaras*, Maha Vagga, i. 1–22; four are in the biographical passage, Culla Vagga, vii. 1–4; and one in a half biographical passage, Maha Vagga, x. 3. The three which occur in Parinibb. S., are all biographical, referring to Cunda's service, Subhaddha's late admission, and Dona's action about the relics.

(*b.*) None of the additional features of the biography or history which are found in Samantapásádiká are supported by verses of this kind.

CHAPTER V

THE BUDDHIST MORAL SYSTEM IN GENERAL

AN author who wishes to describe the Buddhist view of morals in a way intelligible to an English reader, and yet as nearly as possible in the language and spirit of the Buddhist books, is met by considerable difficulties; and in stating some of these difficulties I shall perhaps be able at the same time to convey to the reader some true impressions as to the shape and structure of the books from which our materials are to be derived.

Greatly as the metaphysical element in Buddhist teaching has sometimes been overstated, it is impossible entirely to separate the discussion of morals from that of the general laws of being. This is true to some extent in regard to any moral system, ancient or modern, Greek or Oriental; for whether we consider that the end of conduct is the attainment of truth, or regard the knowledge of truth as the foundation of conduct, either way the two are intimately associated. But it is conspicuously true in the case of the Buddhist system. Not only did Gotama base his rules on his 'Four Truths,' but knowledge itself in the

Buddhist view is almost identified with moral power. The very name 'Buddhism,' of a system which is pre-eminently one of conduct, is derived from 'budh,' to know; and the two are linked together by another characteristic feature of Buddhism, the emphasis which it lays on meditation. Meditation, by which knowledge is brought to bear on conduct, is in fact a part of conduct. Conversely, meditation, by which truth is arrived at, depends upon the essentially moral conditions of purity and self-control. Of the intermediate position which belongs to meditation, the Buddhist compilers were well aware; and accordingly they classified the whole course as conduct, meditation, knowledge. The Buddhist, like the Platonist, though for very different reasons, can never separate virtue from knowledge. We shall see, however, that the knowledge involved is that of a strictly limited group of propositions, and that neither metaphysics nor intellectual knowledge play any large part in the Buddhist system.

Nor are morals separated clearly from metaphysics in the sacred books. It has been usually said that morality is the theme of the Sutta Pitaka, or collection of discourses, exclusively. This is not the case. The Vinaya Pitaka, or collection of the Rules of the Community, contains a very large element of directly moral precepts and lectures, and has embodied in it some of the same discourses which are found in the Sutta (or Sutra) Pitaka. The Abhidhamma Pitaka, though so often spoken of as

deep and subtle, consists in great part of matter similar to that of the Sutta Pitaka, and often differs little from it in arrangement. In the portions of this Pitaka which have been published, many of the sections are virtually Suttas, only without the preface, 'on such an occasion the Buddha said,' and long passages are word for word the same as in the Sutta Pitaka. In fact in the 'Puggala Pannatti' may be found some of the best concise summaries of the whole system. In speaking, therefore, in the following pages of 'the Suttas' I shall not necessarily imply that my material is taken from the Sutta Pitaka, though that will usually be the case. The popular division is so far true that the Sutta Pitaka is the chief repository of teaching specifically moral.

But neither in the Sutta Pitaka nor in either of the others do we find a systematic treatment, on any large scale, of the whole subject of morals.

The notion of a volume, setting out the whole of a subject in a continuous treatise, is unknown to the ancient Buddhist literature. And accordingly, in regard to morality, there is not to be found in the 'canonical' books any complete and regular work upon it, nor any authorised course of instruction.

Nor could such a treatise or course be formed by reading the Suttas in succession. The longest Suttas are hardly longer than a modern essay or sermon; the large majority are shorter; none are so long as the longer dialogues of Plato; and one is not supplemen-

tary to another; each does not take up the subject where the last left off; each purports to be complete in itself. There is very little gained by reading two in succession. It is true that they are extremely systematic in a certain sense of the word, and that many of them cover or summarise a very large part of the field,[1]—in fact it is their vice to be each separately exhaustive—but they go over the field in different directions, and divide up the same subject by a great variety of independent classifications. For instance, while one leads the disciple from conversion to *Nirvana* by the successive casting off of a series of 'impediments,' another leads him the same journey by the rooting out of certain bad habits or states of mind. Under a different name, or even under the same name, the same vice, as for instance 'hatred,' will appear in both series. One Sutta will treat of the three kinds of act, acts of body, of speech, and of thought; and the next Sutta will contrast two characters, that of the man who injures both his neighbour and himself, and that of the man who does good to both; and this contrast will consist in the acts, words, and thoughts of the two men. By studying a multitude of such chapters one receives a forcible impression of the teaching as a connected whole; but it is impossible to compile a connected treatise by putting such chapters together. Such an attempt would result in a mass of repetitions and cross-divisions.

[1] The Sutta translated on pp. 328-337 is a good instance of this, and comes as near as any one would do to giving the reader a notion of the systematic method.

This will appear clearly enough from a rough abridgment of the first and second Suttas of the Majjhima Nikáya, or Collection of treatises of middle length.

The first insists on the necessity of an exact knowledge of the true character, as regards impermanence, etc., of the outer world. Such knowledge will free the man from all attachment to the four material elements, earth, water, fire, and air, to animals, to the lower deities, to the various (fully enumerated) higher deities, to the four infinite regions, to the objects of sight, hearing, thought, and consciousness, to unity, multiplicity, and universality, and to Nirvana itself. This condition exists in the advanced disciple, and is caused by the destruction in him of lust, spite, and stupidity; and this condition is identical with the final perfection of a Buddha.

The second Sutta teaches how to destroy the *asavas* or 'corruptions,' of which three are specified, those of desire, existence, ignorance. They are got rid of by seven methods, viz., by *thinking* only of such things as tend to get rid of them, by *guarding* the five senses, by recollectedness in the *use* of the conventional list of necessaries, by *resignation* to the conventional list of inconveniences, by *avoidance* of the occasions of evil, by *dispelling* the three wrong reflections, desire, malice, and cruelty, by *practising* the seven elements of supreme wisdom. He who has achieved these has ended sorrow.

From this instance it will also be partly seen in

what sense the Suttas are systematic. They are constructed upon numerical systems. There are three wrong reflections—there are eight of this, and four of that; a man may be such and such in ten ways—this numerical method is their system. Analysis, other than numerical division, is very rare. Discussion, in the sense of shaking out a subject and shaking it clear by inquiry, is unknown. There is no searching back to the origin of habits; no recognition of the truth that one virtue runs into another, or that a vice may melt into a virtue by imperceptible gradations. All is definite and dogmatic. Hard-and-fast lines are drawn; words are used with unswerving regularity, but their meaning is not much elucidated. If the meaning of words is explained, it is by accumulating synonyms, or—what is the best part of the whole method—by similes. But results are given, not inquiries. Nothing is tentative.

Such a method is distasteful to an European reader. We delight in watching the process of inquiry, the balancing of different views. In morals especially, we do not feel that we have got far till we have got behind the *names* of the virtues and the vices. We have been accustomed—the European world has been accustomed since the days of Socrates—to find moral discussion consist largely in such inquiries as, 'What is holiness?' 'What distinguishes courage from rashness?' And Socrates taught us, once for all, not to expect absolute unqualified answers to these questions. Mixed motives, blended char-

acters—these interest us. But the Buddha knows nothing conditional, and condescends to nothing tentative. There are so many bad ways and so many good; the good are perfectly distinct from the bad; and the bad ways all tend to re-birth, and all the good ways to deliverance from existence.

Such is a general description of the moral method of the Buddhist books. There are exceptions, and the exceptions are to us the most attractive parts of the Suttas. But they are few. They are oases of genuine human inquiry in a desert of fictitious accuracy.

I have said that we do not find an authorised course of instruction, or a continuous treatment of the whole subject of morality; but I have also alluded to the outline of such a course—conduct, meditation,[1] knowledge—which presents the received classifications of the whole subject. As a guide to a complete arrangement of the whole system of Buddhism it is not to be at all despised or set aside. By a persistent regulation of his conduct, a man becomes qualified for the practice of meditation, which carries him, it is pretended, stage by stage to that condition of mind in which he sees into the nature and causes of things, and in attaining this insight or knowledge he has attained the final goal. Such is the received Buddhist view of the moral course; and it is perhaps possible,

[1] Samádhi, strictly, the self-concentration by which meditation is possible. The act of meditation in its several stages is jhána, but these collectively are often called samádhi.

without much violence, to exhibit all the different parts of the teaching under these three heads. There is a class of Suttas formed on this plan, of which that translated in p. 328 is a specimen.

But the European reader will probably feel that this is not an altogether satisfactory order. He will hold that insight into the meaning and purpose of life is the origin, at least as truly as it is the result, of intelligent moral conduct. In a treatise at any rate he will expect to see the theory first laid down, and then to see practice directed according to theory. And this order is not unrecognised in the Buddhist writings. It is represented as the historical order in the Buddha's own proceedings. Gotama is represented as having first arrived at insight, and then, while he went about proclaiming the 'Truths' which he had realised, as having founded on these 'Truths' the training and the specific precepts and the methods of meditation. Both points of view are taken; and I suspect that the order,—truths, training, conduct,—is the older order, and that of conduct, meditation, knowledge, the later.[1]

Whether this conjecture be well founded or not, I think my reader will be most likely to gain a vivid idea and correct notion of the whole teaching if I

[1] These three, with their result, emancipation, are the four great principles from ignorance of which all beings, including him who by discovering them was the Buddha, 'ran through the long course' of re-birth, Angut. iv. 1, 2. Sometimes the whole is summarised under the two heads Samatha and Vipassana, tranquillity and clear insight; or these are in the reverse order, Angut. iv. 170. Sometimes, more simply, Vijjácaranaṁ, knowledge and conduct.

first sketch the Buddhist ideal, as it appears to me, and then, in the light of the fundamental principles which are implied in that ideal and formulated in the metaphysical truths, describe the vices which are chiefly condemned and the virtues chiefly insisted on.

CHAPTER VI

THE IDEAL OF BUDDHISM

THE qualities most charming to the Indian mind are gentleness and calm. It is to the exhibition of these qualities in a high degree that we can attribute with the greatest probability the personal influence of Gotama the Sakyan, and his acceptance as the Buddha by his contemporaries; if we assume, and we are not at present justified in doubting it, that his contemporaries did allow him that title. These two qualities, gentleness and calm, unite to form the ideal of the Buddhist moralist. In their degenerate form they both pass into apathy, and there are passages of the Pitakas which recommend what is hardly better than that; but the general tone is nearer to the ideal, and recommends a gentleness that rises into positive love, and a calm which is based upon strength and resolution. The picture which is given to us of Gotama represents a character not only calm and gentle, but active, genial, not devoid of humour, deeply sympathetic, and intensely human. In the general tenor of the books we miss the humour; we miss much of the sympathy and

geniality; but we are for the most part in the presence of an ideal which is human and energetic. There are, it is true, many passages, especially those that deal with meditation or with supernatural attainments, which entirely leave behind all that is human, natural, probable, all that is genial or attractive, and sail away into a region of empty abstraction, which it would be flattery to call a cloud-land. But when these are excepted, we are generally in the region of reality, and are addressed in tones which are earnest even when they are most tedious. For third, though with an interval, after gentleness and calm, comes *earnestness* as an element of the Buddhist ideal. To be earnest, to be awake, to strive, and not to give up—these are watch-words incessantly repeated. The absoluteness of the repose to which the sage is invited is matched by the intensity of the effort that is required of him in the way.[1]

To these three elements if a fourth is to be added, it will be that, the name of which we are obliged to represent, for want of a more exact equivalent, by 'Purity.' This cannot be entirely distinguished from calm; but while that is more philosophical, this is more moral. To be without any flaw of imperfection, passion, or feeling; no

[1] Sanyut. xii. 22. 6: 'Seeing that the doctrine has been by me so well spoken, made plain, laid open, proclaimed, all coverings cut, well may any noble youth who has entered the religious life in the faith of that doctrine—well may he exert effort: let skin and muscle and bone alone remain in his body, and flesh and blood dry up, there will be no standing still of his effort till he has reached the utmost point that can be reached by manly strength and manly effort and manly striving.'

ripple ruffling the calm sea, no grain of mud rendering turbid the pure waters, no bond or obstacle interfering with independence—this, I think, is the most favourable aspect, the least merely negative aspect, of the quality implied by 'Visuddhi.' The Buddhist monk is taught to seek

> 'the silence of the breast;
> Imaginations calm and fair:
> The memory like a windless air:
> The conscience as a sea at rest.'[1]

But the idea of conscience has no exact counterpart in the Buddhist system, any more than the Christian idea of sin, as implying moral responsibility, or the transgression of the commands of a Person.

Gazing forth, like the sage of Lucretius, from the serene heights of wisdom, over the varied world of life, but radiating forth, unlike that sage, rays of kind feeling and love in every direction; calm amid storms, because withdrawn into a trance of dreamless unconsciousness; undisturbed, because allowing no external object to gain any hold on sense or emotion, or even on thought; owning nothing and wanting nothing; resolute, fearless, firm as a pillar; in utter isolation from all other beings, except by feeling kindly to them all, such is the ideal 'conqueror' of Buddhism. The last point of vantage by which existence could lay hold of him is gone; he cannot continue to exist!

[1] Tennyson, 'In Memoriam.'

It is a strange medley of contradictions; of noble ideas pushed to extravagant and absurd degrees.

This description of the positive elements of the Buddhist ideal, though sketched almost entirely in terms derived from the 'sacred books,' is not, of course, to be found in them in this shape, and claims only to represent the impression which the writer has derived from reading the Buddhist books. It is placed here, not as being in itself an indisputably true impression, but as suggesting a way of arranging the details of which it is a generalisation.

The negative elements in such a picture are more than the positive. The removal of bonds, and disturbing influences, of all that causes either attachment or hostility, of all that can load the mind with fear or remorse, or that can cloud the judgment or the mental vision,—this removal of evil will be the principal object of effort. Along with this will go the cultivation of the kindly feelings as the chief positive aim.

As subsidiary to these comes the choice of a mode of life in which the evil can best be removed, or in which the man can best detach himself from encumbrances. That life is the life of a member of the Sangha or Community. The householder or layman is at a great disadvantage; all the encumbrances have greater hold on him; and so long as he remains in the house-dwelling state, a certain secondary ideal is all he can hope to reach. To this house life a secondary set of aims and duties belongs: to this

house life is addressed a special part of the teaching, especially that which treats of heaven and hell.

For in the ideal we have described there is no room for aspiration after praise or reward, or for fear of blame or punishment; neither heaven nor hell have any proper place in the system. If they have any place it is a secondary one, as considerations to influence those who have not yet approached the ideal, or as facts which concern those who never approach it. But to the advanced disciples of Buddha, hell is impossible, and heaven indifferent; they are not heard of: the heaven and hell system is the religion of the layman.[1]

Further, out of this inevitable preference for the ascetic life, and from its wide separation from the house life, spring two special classes of duties, those of the monks towards their own order and towards the householder, and those of the householder towards the monk.

Two other important features of the ideal above described may till now, being negative features, have escaped the reader's notice.

The Buddhist saint stands in no relation of dependence towards any being above himself. There is no Creator, no Saviour, no Helper in his purview. Religious duties, properly so called, he has none. He has been his own refuge, his own light; he is what he is by grace of himself alone. Humility

[1] Sénart thinks it was the only Buddhism that existed in Asoka's day; but it is not to be wondered at if what Asoka published in his inscriptions was the layman's rather than the Community's Buddhism.

would not become him; for gratitude he has no occasion.[1] There is thus excluded, from anything but a temporary or subsidiary position, whatever has elsewhere been chiefly meant by 'religion,' and much of what has elsewhere been known as 'virtue.'

The ideal, although of a human character, is the ideal to which, according to Buddhist principles, not human life only, but every form of life may rise. The Buddha has been, in former births, a stag, a dog, or a quail; and what is a quail now may hereafter be a Buddha. For there is no impassable barrier between the various grades of life, of deities, men, demons, or brute animals. What is now a demon may, in his demon life, acquire merit which will profit him hereafter as a man. One *karma* or course of consequence may carry him through a succession of lives as an animal, a god, an animal again, a demon, and again as a god or a man. It is only, indeed, in the human stage that the highest achievement, that of a Buddha, is possible; but Nirvana is accessible to all; to the superior deities and to men directly, and ultimately to all that lives. From this ultimate identification of the various forms of life arises a new and distorted branch of morality, giving exaggerated proportions to the duties of men towards the lower creatures.

[1] 'Except the expressions of astonished admiration to which the new converts give utterance . . . there is not a hint, as of course there could not be, among the virtues of the disciples of Buddha of anything corresponding to that sense of gratitude to the Divine and Beneficent Power whom all other men and all other religions have recognised as giving 'rain and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness.'

CHAPTER VII

ABOLITION OF IGNORANCE

THE beginning and ending of Buddhism is the abolition of ignorance. Ignorance is not looked at only in the light of a defect, as the mere absence of knowledge; it is thought of as a positive evil. Under its terrible name, avijjá, it hangs over all living beings like an active plague, ever spreading its effects in misery and death. It plays the part of a cruel giant, hurling poor mortals into hell, or grinding them along in a weary round of slavery. It is the first parent of the whole genealogy of human woe.

This notion of ignorance as a positive malignant power or calamity is deeply rooted in the Buddhist mind. A young man who had been brought up in a Buddhist monastery in Colombo used to express his longing for more education in this way: 'I must at any cost get rid of this ignorance.'

What then is the knowledge which is sought?

It would be an utter mistake to think of Buddhism as addressed chiefly to the intellect, or as concerned with the promotion of learning. Its adherents are

not required to furnish themselves with even the rudiments of ordinary culture, or to learn by heart any confession of faith. If Buddhism can be said to rest upon a creed, it is the shortest possible of creeds. There is no course of study prescribed for the ordinary disciple. The highest success is not out of the reach of the simplest. Learning is not highly esteemed.

The ignorance which has to be abolished is ignorance of a small body of practical 'truths,' as they are called. That all which exists is perishable and inevitably subject to sorrow; that sorrow can be destroyed only by destroying desire and all that is attached to existence, and that Buddhism furnishes the way to the destruction of these; this conviction is what constitutes knowledge. All beings are by nature plunged in ignorance of these principles (and no wonder, since they are all false), and an effective conviction of their truth is knowledge.

All other learning is disparaged. Questions of science, geography, astronomy, or even of metaphysics, are set aside as useless subtleties. Ignorance of these is not the ignorance that ruins.

Constantly, therefore, as we meet with the phrases 'knowledge' and 'ignorance;' constantly as we find the good Buddhist called the wise or the learned; characteristically as the Buddha is called the Omniscient, yet no emphasis is really laid on any other knowledge than that of the necessary connection of sorrow with existence. To know this fully is already to have escaped. The 'omniscient' Buddha, the

teacher of the three worlds, is one who has mastered this great principle, and has thereby himself escaped from further existence, and who teaches the way of escape to all other beings.

It will be seen now in what sense we say that the abolition of ignorance is the beginning and ending of Buddhism. It is the beginning because the whole system is founded on the realisation of the 'truths' which are the object of knowledge. These lie at the foundation. The whole religion is said as a matter of history to have started, as far as the present age is concerned, with the discovery of these 'truths' by Gotama.

It is the ending, because the whole system aims at producing in the disciple a similar conviction. The insight by which the chain of causation is broken, and re-birth rendered impossible, is attained by the disciple only when all the work is done. He who sees clearly—no longer believing it on the assurance of others, nor arriving at it merely as a conclusion of reasoning—that the cause of sorrow is desire, etc., he has no more duties to perform; no more virtues to acquire; no more reason to remain in life; his course is ended. This conviction is reached by different disciples at very different rates. By hearing the preaching of a Buddha many, we read, grasp it all at once, and are at once perfect. Others only enter on the course, and have still to run through long ages and many births before they arrive at insight.

It must be added, however, that the conviction of

these principles is in a further sense the starting-point as well as the goal of each disciple's course. The 'Truths' are not grasped in their formulated shape, and with full personal realisation of them, till the end; but some glimmering of them is necessary to make a man enter on the course. He has felt dissatisfied with the world; he is disgusted at the impermanence of things; he cries, 'Ah! nothing in the world is eternal!'—and so he turns to Buddhism. To arouse this sense of dissatisfaction, to elicit this cry of disgust, is the aim of all the Buddha's sermons and parables. To deepen this sense of dissatisfaction, and to remove all doubt as to the impermanence of things, is the purpose to which the training of the Community is directed. And from the detailed or scientific study of any of those things, whose perishableness he needs to be convinced of, the disciple is discouraged, because such study does not tend—this is the express ground of Gotama's objection—to produce dissatisfaction.

We read a great deal about the removal of doubt, and about certain fatal errors or 'heresies;' but these are still concerned with the same point, and do not imply any wider range either of study or of dogma. That things are eternal; that the self or personality in man has a continuous existence; these are the great 'heresies.' In regard to such questions as the ultimate nature of matter, elements, atoms and the like, or in regard to the nature of the soul, as we call it, or self, or the existence of the individual (or the

Buddha) after death, whatever may be said is alike a heresy or error.

So far is Buddhism from involving metaphysical study or learning. The destruction of ignorance is in fact a moral rather than an intellectual result.

If it now be asked, How is this result attained? the answer is in the main such as has already been indicated. It is realised by some sooner than by others: the Buddhist training, especially of the monk, is directed to securing it, by removing on the one side the obstacles and hindrances which prevent the mind's eye from being clear, and on the other side by methods of meditation.

Some men are held to be better prepared than others: the eyes of their mind being purified from the dust of passion, and their hearts softened by kindly feeling and quickened by enthusiasm or aspiration.

The orthodox view of this kind of receptivity, which distinguishes the ready hearer, may be gathered from some very familiar passages. We have seen that the newly enlightened Buddha is said to have hesitated to enter on the task of teaching what he had come to know, because it seemed to him a hopeless task. 'This doctrine,' he said, 'is not easy to understand for those who are sunk in lust and hatred, those who are given up to lust and enfolded with thick darkness cannot see it. It is against the stream' (of natural inclination), 'subtle, deep, difficult to see and minute.' But Mahabrahma came, at the entreaty

of the gods, to persuade him that it was not hopeless. 'There are,' he said, 'beings who have been born with eyes almost free from dust; they are dying from not hearing the doctrine; they will be understanders of the doctrine.'

Being thus persuaded to undertake the work of teaching, and considering with whom he might best begin, the Buddha thought, we read, of his early friend Alara Kalama, and said to himself, 'Long since his eyes have been almost free from dust.' He soon learnt, as the reader will remember, that Alara was already dead.

In the narratives of his subsequent sermons, where notable conversations are recorded, there are, in many instances, two stages in the process. The main portion of the discourse leads the hearer into the highest degree of receptivity, and then the specific and fundamental dogmas are stated to him, and he accepts them at once with complete insight. 'When the Blessed One perceived that Yasa's mind was prepared, softened, freed from hindrances, delighted, and believing, then he made known to him that which is the peculiar doctrine of the Buddhas, suffering, its cause, its destruction, the way.'

In regard to the several degrees in which different disciples may have attained to this condition, emerging from the flood of ignorance, freed from the restraints of attachment to existence or existing things, and clear of the dust of passion, a striking and beautiful illustration is constantly repeated. 'As in a lotus

pond some flowers are under water, some reach to its surface, while others emerge and stand up out of the water, and the water does not touch them ; so the eyes of some are almost free from dust, those of others covered with dust, some have keen sense, some blunt, some have good characteristics, some bad, some are easy to teach and some difficult.'

This is the 'purity' (visuddhi) which the Buddhist system is said to aim at producing, and to the discipline of which we shall hereafter return. It consists mainly in the absence of two great classes of evils, attachment and passion. But before entering further upon these we must examine somewhat more closely the dogmas which are called the 'Four Truths,' and the 'Chain of Causation.'

CHAPTER VIII

THE FOUR TRUTHS, ETC.

The Metaphysical Basis

THE founder of Buddhism, if any reliance at all is to be placed on the books which profess to describe his life and his teaching, had he been asked 'What are the fundamental and the characteristic elements of your system?' would certainly have replied, 'The Four noble Truths or the doctrine of the Chain of Causes.' It was by the attainment, under the Bo-tree, of the knowledge of these, that he became a Buddha. 'So long, O monks, as I did not possess in perfect clearness this triple, twelve-part, trustworthy knowledge and understanding of these Four noble Truths, so long I knew that I had not attained the supreme Buddhahood, etc.; but since I have come to possess in perfect clearness, this, etc. . . . I know that I have attained the supreme Buddhahood.'

These are not two distinct groups of dogma, for the Chain of Causes is the fuller statement of that theory of the cause of life with its sorrows, which is the central principle of the Four noble Truths.

We might, in fact, call them one dogma, that of the Causation and Destruction of Sorrow. It is difficult to exaggerate the importance which is assigned in the sacred books of Buddhism to these two closely allied formularies. At the same time it would be difficult to point to a single passage in which they are applied in any practical way, or in which their bearing on the moral precepts is shown. I believe that they have such a bearing. The view of life, of which they are the abstruse metaphysical statement, does underlie the whole moral teaching, and I shall try presently to show this.

But first, that the reader may be persuaded to give some special attention to these formularies, I will show him what position they occupy in the Buddhist texts.

The Vinaya Pitaka, or Collection of the Rules of Training for the Community, opens with the picture of the Buddha in the act of attaining Buddhahood, or in the immediate enjoyment of Buddhahood attained, sitting under his sacred tree, and revolving in his mind backward and forward the twelve-fold links of the Chain of Causation; through which ignorance leads up to birth and to the sorrows of life. Knowing this, he was a Buddha.[1] His first sermon, which set in motion the triumphant chariot-wheel of his doctrine and system, consisted of the declaration of the 'Four Truths;' the fact of sorrow, that desire is the cause of sorrow, that sorrow ceases when desire is removed, that this is effected by a certain course of

[1] Maha Vagga, i. 1.

conduct.[1] In a multitude of places[2] this formulary is spoken of as 'the characteristic teaching of the Buddhas.' These dogmas are emphatically repeated, as the end for which mankind have been so long seeking, running through life after life, in the sixth book of the same Vinaya.[3]

The knowledge of these is the 'deep knowledge,' in comparison with which mere morality is disparaged.[4] The Four Truths are the one unambiguous dogma: on other speculative questions Gotama would not dogmatise, but these were incontrovertible.[5] He who understands these things stands at the very door of immortality.[6] He who sees the Chain of Causes and nature of things ceases to inquire into past, present, or future.[7] This knowledge is placed above the law of love, and above meditation,[8] as being the end for which these are practised. It is the crown of all supernatural powers.[9]

Ignorance is, in fact, simply ignorance of the Four Truths.[10] In the grasp of them freedom consists.[11] A large part of the books is occupied with the statement and re-statement of them in every conceivable order and combination.[12] The first forty chapters of one collection (the Sanyutta Nikáya) are almost entirely given to this endless turning over of the formularies,

1 Maha Vagga, i. 6. 19-22.
2 *e.g.* Maha Vagga, v. 1.
3 Maha Vagga, vi. 29.
4 Brahmaj Sutta.
5 Potthapad. Sutta (Dig. Nik. ix. 33 etc.).
6 Sanyut. xii. 28-37.
7 Sanyut. xii. 20.
8 Angut. iv. 190.
9 Sámañ. Sutta, 97.
10 Sanyut. xii. 2-15.
11 Sanyut. xii. 41 *et passim*.
12 Maj. Nik. ix., for instance, is the multiplication of the Four Truths into the Twelve Causes.

and it is expressly recommended in the same book.[1]

This almost mechanical method is chiefly found in books which are among the later, as I believe, parts of the Pitaka,[2] but the estimate of the importance of the Four Truths and the Chain of Causation is the same everywhere.[3] Before quoting these celebrated formularies, I must remind the reader what that view of the human soul and of human life is which is taken for granted in them. Unless we grasp that view of the human soul and of human life, we shall inevitably misunderstand the 'Truths.'

Buddhism does not hold that there is any such thing as a permanent independent soul, existing in or with the body, and migrating from one body to another. The Self or personality has no permanent reality: it is the result of certain elements coming together,—a combination of faculties and characters. No one of these elements is a person, or soul, or Self, but to their combination the name Self is popularly given. According to Buddhist doctrine, such an application of the name is a mistake, for there exists no such thing.[4] The death of a man is the breaking up of this combination; not the separation of soul from

[1] Sanyut. xii. 32. [2] Angut. and Sanyut.
[3] See S. N. 3-12, 4-11; Dham. 1-20, *et passim*.
[4] It is clear from this that transmigration is not, in Buddhist theory, the evolution of character. It is not a Buddhist sentiment that finds expression in the lines:—

'The man remains, and whatsoe'er
He wrought of good or brave
Will mould him through the cycle year
That dawns beyond the grave.'—Tennyson.

body, but the dissolution both of body and of the aggregate of faculties and characters on which life depended.

Life then is a combination : separate those elements and life is at an end. If they never combined, there would be no life, no self, no personality.

But as things are, there is at work in the world a force by which these elements on which life depends, these faculties and characters,—form, consciousness, sense, perception, mental energy,—*tend to re-combine.* No sooner has a man died, and his life-elements been scattered, than they enter, under pressure of this force, into new combinations. A new life is the result. There is a fatal tendency to reproduce life (its name is *karma*), a fatal attraction (upádána) by which the elements of life cling to one another. And so, no sooner is a man dead, by the dissolution of his life-elements, than he comes into being again, by their re-combination. For during life he had set in motion that fatal force—all lives set it in motion and the world is full of it—(the consequence of action) which causes re-combination. It remains, after the man is dead, as a kind of desire for new life, and animates, as it were, with the desire to re-combine, those broken elements of life.

To avoid encumbering the matter with ideas foreign to our European thought, I have spoken so far of human life. But in Buddhist thought there is no permanent distinction between human life and other kinds or grades of life. When the life-elements by

which a man lived break up, they may re-combine to form either a man, or a deity, or a dog. 'He goes according to his "karma,"' according to his actions in the life just ended and in previous ones,—according to the total or resultant force of all the actions of the particular series of lives that is in question—he 'goes' to a new condition (gati). In the new condition his life-elements are new; nothing passes on from the past life to the new one, except the force which tends to form a new combination of life-elements. That force is the 'action,' the moral result of the past combinations in that series. It is this continuity that makes the Buddhist say, 'he goes,' and attribute to one being the whole series of lives (see the Sutta on p. 336).

But if all tendency to re-combine were gone, if the being had been so trained in resisting all kinds of attraction, that there should not remain even that attraction by which life-elements re-combine, if clinging of every sort were destroyed in him, then, after his death, there would be no re-combination, he would be free.

To be thus after death detached, he must be detached here. He must resist all attractions here, that the life-attraction may not re-appear after his death. He must uproot all desire; then the desire for re-birth will not assert itself. He must not love life; but must fix his mind on the idea of dissolution, transitoriness; and convince himself that he need not, and in fact in some sense does not, now exist. Then

when the body breaks up, there will be nothing left; no fuel will remain, not even the least tinder of desire for the flame of life to catch upon; he will go out altogether.

It is in the light of this view of human and other life (which was, in the main, not peculiar to Buddhism or newly taught by Gotama), that the Four Truths must be read.

But there is another feature in the habit of mind of those days, which must also be realised; a feature common, I suppose, to all the philosophy of the India of Gotama; the dreary view of life, as an evil. The fact that man is born to trouble seems to have been in the sixth century before Christ the overpowering fact which pressed upon the Indian mind. How to overcome it or escape from it was the one problem. The problem seems to have presented itself to Indian thought in a form at once extremely abstract and extremely intense. The same fact exists for all men at all times, and all men at all times have had the same problem before them. But other nations, whether in lightness of heart, or in practical activity, or in hopeless fatalism, have more or less put the question aside; and when they have dealt with it, they have been content to seek for partial solutions. How shall we be happy after death if not here? How shall we secure as large as possible a share of happiness along with the inevitable trouble? Most men have had enough of hopefulness to address themselves rather to the search for happiness than to the flight from pain.

All men, according to Aristotle, seek happiness. But the Indian Aryans of Gotama's day seem to have looked chiefly at the dark side; nor did they find in the universality of the fact of pain any reason for feeling it the less. They saw it in the most general and abstract form and yet felt it most intensely.

Gotama's first proposition, the first of the Four Noble (Aryan) Truths, amounted simply to this: Sorrow is universal. 'This, mendicants, is the noble truth of sorrow: birth is sorrow, old age is sorrow, sickness is sorrow, death is sorrow, the presence of the unloved is sorrow, the absence of the loved is sorrow, all that one wishes for and does not get is sorrow: briefly, the five elements by which beings hold to existence are sorrow.' This, in so far as it was true, was no new discovery; it was the frank acceptance of the facts; but in so far as it was new, in so far as it laid down, for the foundation of a system of conduct, the proposition that there is no bright side to things, it was a hideous falsehood. The statement was ambiguous, either obviously true or utterly false. We may suppose that it approved itself to many, and perhaps to Gotama's own mind, in consequence of its ambiguity. Only so regarded can it be regarded as a striking statement. It must cover some such transition of thought as this: 'Pain and suffering are indisputably an universal fact in human life: pain is the inseparable condition of all existence: all is pain.'

This conclusion one cannot too clearly denounce

as a falsehood;—not only a way of looking at things which is hateful to us, but a categorical falsehood. There are such things as joy and good; they are abundant on every side; there is no existence altogether without them. This is as obviously true as it is that there is no earthly existence altogether separate from pain; and the ambiguity which glides unperceived from the fact of suffering, which all admit, to the denial of all good in existence, marks a falsehood as unphilosophical as it is gloomy. This ambiguity must be supposed to have given to the 'First Truth' whatever force or novelty it possessed. But it formed the logical starting-point of the whole system.

The Second 'Truth' is thus stated: 'This, mendicants, is the noble truth of the cause of sorrow. Desire' (literally 'thirst') 'that leads from birth to birth, and is accompanied by pleasure and pain, seeking its gratification here and there—namely, desire of sensual pleasure, desire of existence, desire of wealth.'[1] The general statement, that desire is the cause of sorrow, is here explained by the three-fold division of desire. Desire of sensual pleasure, desire of existence, desire of wealth (or whatever the phrase means).

[1] I have not ventured to go against Professor Oldenberg and Professor Rhys Davids here. They both take 'Vibhava' in the ordinary sense of 'power,' or 'prosperity.' But the Pali Commentaries say it is the lust which is encouraged by the expectation of annihilation at death,—the desire to 'eat and drink because to-morrow we die' (finally). 'Ucchedadiṭṭhi sahagato rágo vibhavatanháti vuccati,' *Visuddhi Marg.* 'Ucchedadiṭṭhi sahagatassa rágassa etam adhivacanam,' *Saccavibhang. Atthakath.*

The third of these I put out of sight (see note), and ask the reader's attention for what I have to say about the other two. This twofold aspect of 'desire,' as 'desire of sensual pleasure,' and 'desire of existence,' corresponds to a twofold aspect of the whole Buddhist system. The treatment of *sensual desire* as the cause of sorrow is the moral, practical, and from a strict Buddhist point of view, the superficial and commonplace, part of the system. The treatment of the *desire of existence* as the cause of sorrow is the metaphysical foundation of the system. The connection between the two is obscure, both in the second Truth and in the system at large.

That the desire for pleasure leads to sorrow, is a truth not peculiar to Buddhism, though it is duly insisted on in the Buddhist books. We shall see this abundantly hereafter. But that the desire of pleasure is the only and adequate cause of sorrow is, of course, untrue; and this the Buddhist writers clearly saw, attributing, as they do, at least as much evil to hatred. This, then, is only a part, and not the deepest part, of the meaning of the Second Truth.

The cause of sorrow is desire for existence; thirst for existence. This is the characteristic statement. This, in fact, is what connects the second Truth with the first: all existence, says the first Truth, is sorrow. All desire, says the second Truth, leads to renewed existence. It 'leads from birth to birth:' it tends to perpetuate the series. In the light of what has been said above as to the view of life and re-

birth, the meaning of this is clear. Existence rests on combination, life rests on attachment to objects. Were there no contact with external objects, no contact of touch or thought, there could be no life. It is the grasping at outward objects, the clinging to them, which renders personal existence possible.

Further, it is that unextinguished craving after existence—perpetuated after death by the act-force of a man or other living thing—which brings about re-birth, and so sorrow.

The Third 'Truth' is but the necessary sequel of the second. The effect ceases when the cause ceases. The third 'Truth,' therefore, is, that the cessation of sorrow is effected by the eradication of desire.

Here, again, the words have a more obvious moral meaning, and a deeper and more characteristic metaphysical meaning. Obviously—and this forms a large part of the moral system of Buddhism—by diminution of the list of necessaries, by detachment from all objects of desire, by the cultivation of indifference, a large class of pains would be avoided. But this is only one application of a principle, which seemed to Gotama to be universally true, and which, if it were true, would go far deeper than the region of mere pleasures and pains, would strike, as he thought it did, at the very roots of life—the principle that if desire for the root elements of being could be eradicated, if there were no clinging to those fundamental elements without which existence is impossible, then there would be no birth and no sorrow, because there would exist no

being to be born. The living creature, he seems to have argued, has a hold on life: it has grasped at the elements on which life depends. If only it can loose that grasp, if only it can shake off the longing which has hitherto made it grasp these foundations of life, then its further existence will be impossible. The sensual desires are but one manifestation of the craving for a hold on things: they are the first to be cast away; but far down below, nearer the central root of being, are links which must be broken, longings of an unconscious innate thirst for existence which must be extinguished, before a being can escape altogether from the dreary round of birth and death and birth.

Something like this, I believe, is the thought which was enshrined in these 'Truths.' It is carried into detail in another formula—the Chain of Causation; the series of causes which lead up from ignorance to sorrow.

The 'Chain of Causation'[1] is thus stated: 'From ignorance come conformations; from conformations comes consciousness; from consciousness come name and corporeal form; from name and corporeal form come the six fields (of sense); from the six fields comes contact (between the senses and their objects); from contact comes sensation; from sensation comes thirst (or desire); from desire comes clinging (to exist-

[1] I have followed Professor Oldenberg's translation. The word here rendered 'conformations' has many applications. The root means 'putting together,' and the branches of meaning in various and even opposite directions are innumerable.

ence); from clinging (to existence) comes being; from being comes birth; from birth come old age, and death, pain, and lamentation, suffering, anxiety, and despair. This is the origin of the whole realm of suffering.

'But if ignorance be removed [by the complete extinction of desire], this brings about the removal of conformations; by the removal of conformations—and so on. This is the removal of the whole realm of suffering.'

'It is utterly impossible,' says Professor Oldenberg—and who will attack a metaphysical puzzle which he declares insoluble?—'to trace from beginning to end a connected meaning in this formula.' Even the ancient Buddhists, he tells us, 'found here a stumbling-block.' They offer no attempt to elucidate the earlier stages of it. Nor shall I follow the Professor even so far as he sees his way; but shall be content to touch on a few points.

1. Around the words 'by the complete extinction of desire' I have placed a bracket, because as they stand in the English they might mislead. They would appear only to put desire back behind ignorance as a still earlier and more ultimate cause; and thus upset the whole system. But there is no such impression conveyed by the original. The 'desire' here is not the 'desire' of the second truth, or the 'thirst' which occupies the eighth place in the chain.[1] The whole phrase, which in Pali is only part of a

[1] Rágo, not tanhá.

word, refers to the practical method of extinguishing ignorance, or rather describes the character of the man in whom it is extinguished. The phrase must be omitted in considering the passage as a whole.

2. How consciousness leads to desire is not very difficult to understand. Certainly, if we were not conscious we should not be aware of objects; and if not aware of them, should not desire them. This is a little more subtly put in the passage before us; and on some of the links a little light is thrown by scattered passages in the books. Among the elements of being, or at any rate of life, is consciousness. The conscious being begins to identify outward things, gives them name and form; outward things thus discriminated become the objects of the senses; the organs of sense are brought into contact with them, and so sensation, a keen impression from the object, is conveyed to the mind, and the mind allowing that keen impression to affect it, is moved towards the object, and desires it.

How desire leads to the clinging, first to outward objects, and further and deeper down to the elements of life themselves, we have already seen.

3. Thus the whole statement, from the second link to the twelfth, may be read thus: The conscious being placed in the world of objects naturally tends to attach itself to them, and to create for itself a continuous series of relations to them by which its existence is perpetuated in a world of sorrow.

4. And now we can read the first link thus: 'This

is because it knows no better.' A being that knew that all existence is sorrow, and what causes sorrow, and how it can be destroyed, would allow none of these processes to take place. A wise man will detach himself from things, pay no attention to what comes before his senses, withdraw his mind from identifying names and forms till consciousness is gone (this is the process of moral seif-restraint and meditation); then full insight into the nature and causes of things will burst upon him: ignorance will be removed, his life-elements will be dissolved, there will be no more consciousness or sensation, or desire or birth or sorrow for him.

If knowledge is the removal of ignorance, it must be ignorance that was at the root of all the evil.

These hints are, I confess, the best I can do towards giving a meaning to the Chain of Causation. In the Pali texts I have never met with any attempt to explain or even to illustrate either the particular sequences or the whole. A praiseworthy effort is made in one or two places to explain the idea of cause by illustrations. The effect and the cause are like two bundles resting against one another: as the rivers are affected by the sea, as fire arises from sticks, so do sorrow and pleasure arise from contact: as light without something to reflect it falls ineffective, so without pleasure and pain the whole Chain of Causation is null.[1]

[1] Sanyut. xii. 63. 64. These and other illustrations are drawn out in the *Questions of Milinda*, *S.B.E.*, vol. xxxv. p. 85, etc

And modern European writers have constructed many theories; but I have never seen them appeal to any Pali text in their support, the plain reason being that the Pali texts do not touch the point.

We must suppose that the old writers considered the meaning and bearing as well as the truth of those formularies to be knowable only by that insight which comes at the end of the believer's course. Any one who knew these things would be in Nirvana!

The position of ignorance at the beginning of all, as the ultimate cause and active producer of evil, is thoroughly in accordance with the view always taken of ignorance, as if it were a positive force. From that which commends itself to every mind, the truth that men undergo much sorrow which with more knowledge they might have avoided, the Buddhist mind seems to have glided to the paradox, that it is out of ignorance that the whole world of suffering being has its origin.

Yet it is impossible to doubt—if we have any history of Gotama's views at all—that this appeared to him in the light of an ultimate and precious truth. He seemed to himself to see clearly all the steps by which ignorance begets birth and death. The sight of these was his inspiration, his Buddhahood. It sent him forth full of enthusiastic resolve to bring others to the same triumphant vision; full of confidence that it would mean to others as much as it did to him. But in our ignorance of the meaning which the terms

bore to him, and of the habits of thought to which he addressed them, we cannot estimate the degree of truth—for some truth there must have been—which the formula conveyed.

But this, I think, we may say confidently: that to the majority of Buddhist teachers these great dogmas had no ascertained connection with conduct. They are never, to my knowledge, brought to bear upon it. There are innumerable passages which urge the destruction of lust or desire; but is there one in which the method recommended for destroying it is founded on its being the immediate effect of 'sensation'?[1] Often as it is stated that sensation begets desire, I have met with no account of any instance of it, nor any illustration of the process.[2] Still less is the relation of consciousness to the 'fields of sense' brought to bear on conduct. The moral system as we find it in the books would lose nothing by the removal of the Four Truths and the Chain of Causation.

This isolation of the moral rules from these great principles is notably illustrated by that to which we

[1] For instance, in Sanyut. xii. 58, 'Name and form' is said to get a hold on the mind, not of the man who indulges 'consciousness,' but of him who finds pleasure in such things as the heresies, passions, and other 'bonds.' And the origin of 'consciousness' is attributed in the next chapter to the same 'bonds,' not to 'conformations.' And in the next, 'desire' (the cause in the series of 'clinging') is said to be produced by devotion to principles of 'clinging.' And all this in a series of passages specially occupied with the Chain of Causation. So in Maj. Nik. x. 60. 61, 'sensation,' 'clinging,' and the 'fields of sense' are treated without regard either to their order or their relation to one another in the chain.

[2] Sanyut. xii. 62, does go a little more closely into the production of sensation by touch, comparing it to the production of heat by fire-sticks.

have now to return: the Fourth Truth and the Eightfold Way.

The Fourth Truth is plain enough:

'This, O mendicants, is the noble truth of the way of living which leads to the extinction of sorrow: it is this noble Eightfold Way: right faith, right resolve, right speech, right action, right living, right effort, right recollectedness, right meditation.'[1]

It may be briefly paraphrased thus: Desire is eliminated by following the general course of conduct taught by the Buddha. We are obliged to say 'the general course, etc.,' because the Eightfold Way, constantly as it is praised, is never explained. Perhaps the terms refer to some system of early Buddhism, or some arrangement actually instituted by Gotama, of which all record is lost; perhaps there was an intention to draw up such a system, which was never executed; perhaps the word 'Eightfold' had some associations unknown to us; but however that may be, there is no Eightfold Path to be found in the books, no eight branches of study or practice corresponding to the eight names. It is not enough to say that no one, but for this phrase, would ever have noticed in the Buddhist writings any such divisions or method as these eight names imply: the strictest search fails to discover any such divisions or method. (See Note on Eightfold Way.)

The doctrine that it is the Middle Way is, though often named, rarely stated, and still more rarely

[1] On the exact meaning of this term, see note on p. 94.

explained, illustrated, or dwelt upon. Sometimes Gotama's system is explained to be a way middle between the extremes of austerity and indulgence; sometimes a middle between the assertion and the denial of certain metaphysical positions. The Middle Way is another instance of a Buddhist formula which has played no real part in the thought of the writers of the books.

One is sometimes almost inclined to conclu that there has been an amalgamation of two originally distinct and separate Buddhisms; one the Buddhism of the formulas, the other the practical moral system.

But there is a real and deep-lying link which binds the two together. The moral system is founded on a principle which is closely akin to the 'Truths' and the 'Causes.' It is the principle of impermanence. The exclamation, Aniccá vata sankhárá,[1] 'Ah! composite things are not eternal! How transitory are all component things!' expresses as truly the teaching of Gotama as do the Truths themselves, though it is not, so far as I have read, ever attributed to him, but always to his followers. The sentiment which it expresses is simpler and truer than the 'First Truth,' and much better calculated to influence conduct. Upon it, not upon the Truths, Buddhist morality is founded.

The result of all this will have been, I think, to

1 Aniccá vata mayam: 'We are all transitory,' cry all beings in panic when the lion-like Buddha utters his voice, Angut. iv. 33. It is the essential principle, Maj. Nik. 35.

convince the reader that elaborate metaphysical theories play a smaller part in the Buddhism of the books than he had been led to suppose. It appears that the link between the Four Truths and the moral system is little more than artificial.

But it is difficult to overrate the connection between the moral method and the doctrine of impermanence. On the conviction that all things are impermanent depends that sense of distaste, which drives men to lead ascetic lives, to enter the Community, or if laymen, to prepare for death by obtaining merit. To awaken and maintain that sense of distaste are instituted all the processes of meditation, especially the favourite one on the foulness of the body; and the rules of the Community, especially as to the character and use of the few necessaries of their life, are directed to the same end. Closely connected with the impermanence of outward objects is the unreality of the personal self—a doctrine which has practically influenced the moral system, and one which is a special topic of meditation.

It is only, then, if we consider the Four Truths and the Twelve Causes as being generally represented by the formula, 'Aniccá vata sankhárá,' that we shall find it true to say that the moral system rests on the metaphysical foundation.

To put the practical system shortly, Buddhism teaches: That if men cling to objects, and thence are guilty of lust and hatred and pride, it is because they are ignorant that those objects are impermanent;

while by the knowledge of their impermanence men become detached from objects, and their (evil) passions are eradicated. This detachment will be the subject of the next chapter.

Note on the Eight-fold Way

The Eight-fold Way, though constantly alluded to, is seldom treated under its eight heads. It is stated in Maha Vagga, i. 6, 18, 22, named in *ib.* vii. 6, but not, I think, afterwards referred to in the Vinaya; just named in Dhammapada i. 20, p. 67; so in § 13 of Kassapa Sihanáda S. Digh. Nik. p. 165; so in Sanyut. xii. 27, *et pass.* In Angut. iv. 34 it is one of a tetrad with the Buddha Doctrine and Community. There is no place in the Pitakas in which these eight are so treated as to form a complete classification, under eight heads, of the whole Buddhist method. In the Visakha Sutta, or part of the Cullavedabba Sutta of Majjhima Nikaya (p. 300 Trenckn.), they are grouped in relation to (1) Knowledge, 'right belief,' being concerned with the apprehension of knowledge, and 'right resolution' with its application; (2) Conduct, 'right conduct, speech, livelihood,' being connected with moral conduct; (3) Meditation, 'right effort, recollection, recollectedness,' being concerned with meditation. This is the only attempt I have seen to exhibit them as embracing the whole system.

In the Suttanta division of Sutta Vibhanga (of the Abhidhamma Pitaka) they are thus explained: 'Right belief' is knowledge or intellectual grasp of the Four Truths. 'Right resolution' is carrying out this knowledge in a two-fold way, viz. by leaving the world (nekhamma), and by meek and friendly conduct. 'Right speech' is avoiding falsehood, slander, abuse, and chattering. Right conduct is avoiding three other of the five precepts, that is, avoiding taking life, stealing, and sexual sin. 'Right livelihood' is the reverse of 'wrong livelihood' (micchájívo), and is elsewhere defined as being distinguished from that of the poor who take life from necessity, and that of princes who take life from pride.[1] (The proper

[1] But Micchajivo seems to be used in Culla Vagga, i. 14, for all kinds of ill ways of spending time, both by word and deed; especially such as games, etc. Wrongly rendered, I think, in *Sacred Books*, vol. xi., 'lying ways of living.'

livelihood is either that of a monk, or that of a cultivator or of a merchant, as these are supposed not to involve taking life.) 'Right effort' is four-fold, as it aims at (1) the destruction of demerit which has been acquired, (2) avoiding the acquirement of future demerit, (3) the acquirement of new merit, (4) the increase of merit by (*a*) not losing it, (*b*) increasing it.[1] The terms describing this effort are such as imply successively the aim, the undertaking, the setting one's-self in order for carrying it out (as a man takes up the reins and gets his horses in hand in order to drive), and, finally, exertion. 'Right recollectedness' is knowing and seeing clearly the true character and condition of (1) the body, (2) the emotions, and (3) the mind. This is not properly called 'meditation;' it is more properly 'thoughtfulness' or 'mindfulness,' as rendered by Rhys Davids. 'Right meditation' is the four-fold method of 'jhánam,' in which the five 'coverings' are successively removed, and five grades of contemplation, ending in 'unity' or complete collectedness, are achieved.

Elsewhere they are generally only named (as in Sanyut. xiv. 28). A notable instance is Sanyut. iii. 2, 7, 8, where the question 'How does good company lead in the eight-fold way?' is answered thus: 'It promotes right belief, right resolution, right conduct, and right effort.' In other places the eight, or some of them, are applied as categories from the particular point of view which the writer is taking. In Majjhima Nikaya, lx. p. 402 *ad fin.*, right belief, resolution, speech, are treated as one series, opposed to three stages of heresy. 'Sammáditthi,' by itself, is constantly and abundantly enlarged on, so is 'Sammaváco' in connection with the prohibition of falsehood. S. Sati, in Angut. iv. 30, is opposed to muttha sati and asampajánasati, and S. Samádhi to 'asamáhito,' 'vibbhanta citto.' The only allusion found to S. Sankappo is in Angut. iv. 353, where, however, it is not so called.

In Sanyut. xii. 65, this 'way' is compared to an ancient road to an ancient city, made by men of old, which has now been found, repaired and built. The Buddhas of old trod this way; Gotama, in his wanderings, found it.

The phrase is thus a famous title for the Buddha system, but no special teaching is conveyed by it.

Outside the Pitaka, an elaborate but artificial explanation is

[1] See on S. Váyámó Angut. N. iv. 13, where there is the same four-fold division.

given by Buddhaghosha in Sumang-Vil. i. *ad fin.* p. 314. 'Right belief' is fully discussed, and then each of the remaining seven is treated in its effect upon the rest of the character (Sahajáte dhamme). S. Sankappo tests, S. Váco grasps, S. Kammanto originates, S. 'Ajivo purifies, S. Váyámo exerts, S. Sati fixes, S. Samádhi unifies. This is not an interpretation of the system, but an ingenious application of the terms from a given point of view.

There are occasional variations: for instance in Angut. iv. 14. 30, S. Sati and S. Samádhi form, with 'ungreed' and 'unhate,' four Dhammapadas. In Angut. iv. 31 we have Sammápasádhi, 'right aim,' equivalent, I suppose, to Sammá Sankappo.

CHAPTER IX

MORAL SYSTEM

Disgust and Detachment

I HAVE already alluded to the dislike, which Gotama is represented as expressing, for metaphysical and psychological, and even for astronomical or geographical studies and discussions. The reason assigned for his disparagement of them is, that they do not tend to produce dissatisfaction (*nibbidá*).[1]

Dissatisfaction, or disgust, for so it may properly be rendered, is not only an intellectual conviction that there is no permanent satisfaction to be found in anything, since all things are impermanent, but also a positive shrinking from them; such a strong feeling as sends the man away from his home and his pleasures, crying, 'How repulsive these things are, now I see them in their true light!' It is under the impulse of this feeling that a man joins—such is the theory—the Buddhist Community. In its stronger form it is the motive of *pabbajja*, the going out from house life into the religious life; in lower degrees it leads the layman, though he does not leave house-life,

[1] Sanyut. xii. 61; D. N. ix. 33.

to sit loose to his wealth, and seek only how he may attain merit by giving it away, to seek in what field he may most profitably *sow* the wealth he no longer cares to keep. We read that when Yasa, the rich young man who had been delicately nurtured with three several palaces for the three seasons, saw the unseemly appearance of the sleeping women, 'the danger of it all became clear to him, and his mind was disgusted, and he cried, "Oh! how distressing! Oh! how dangerous!"'[1]

Gotama himself—he is represented in the sacred books as saying—was led to 'go forth' by the same emotion. He used to consider with himself the fact of age, disease, etc., until, determined to escape them, he left his weeping parents, etc. Of this, the well-known story of the prince's driving through the town, and seeing the old man, the sick man, and the corpse, is a later amplification. It was an almost inevitable embodiment of the recognised law, by which the wish for *pabbajja*, the resolve to become a mendicant, was supposed to be excited by disgust at old age, disease, and death. 'Seeing others afflicted, seeing men seized with desire, tormented and overcome by decay, so shalt thou be heedful and leave desire behind, and so never return to existence.'[2]

The object most calculated, in Buddhist view, to produce this disgust, is the human body itself, living as well as dead. One of the commonplaces or stock formulas which constantly recur—is the enumeration

[1] M. V. i. 7; *supra*, p. 47.

[2] Sutt. Nip. v. 17; *S.B.E.* x. 17, p. 209.

of the thirty-two impurities of the body : its secretions and excretions are to be separately and minutely contemplated, attention is to be paid to its separate parts and tissues, bone, skin, nerve, and blood, the internal organs, each in turn, till the man is disgusted with himself. He is recommended also to observe a corpse, first newly dead, then cast out in the burial ground, then in each stage of putrescence, and all the loathsome accompaniments of decay.

The reader may look at Sutta Nipat, i. 11, in *Sacred Books of the East*, x. *b* 32, or at the less disgusting, but less typical, passage in Dhammap. xi. 2 ; *Sacred Books of the East*, x. *a* 41. 'Look at this dressed-up lump, covered with wounds . . . wasted, full of sickness, and frail. This heap of corruption breaks to pieces . . . these white bones . . . what pleasure is there in looking at them ?'

This sort of mental exercise is not only highly commended, but regarded as typical of all meditation. It is given in several places as the specimen of right effort of mind or meditation, not, I suppose, as being the best, but as the commonest and most elementary ; *e.g.*, 'a man should do his best when a good point of meditation has occurred to him to keep it before his mind : such as the idea of a skeleton, a corpse eaten by worms, a corpse turning blue, festering, splitting up, blown out with decay.'[1]

'All evil passions proceed from the body.' Buddha said : 'Passion and hatred have their origin

[1] Angut. iv. 14, *et passim*.

thence; dislike and liking and terror are born thence: thence doubts arise which vex the mind as boys do a crow.'[1] 'The dissolution of one's own body is seen by the noble ones to be joy.'[2]

Among the few traces of any methods of meditation which survive in actual practice in Ceylon, is the recitation, by each young novice, when he is invested with the yellow robe, of the verses which enumerate these thirty-two impurities of the body.

I cannot but remark on the degrading effect which must follow on the encouragement of such a view of the human body. I know that there have been, in the morbid development of Christian asceticism, no small excesses in the same direction; but they have been morbid and exceptional. There is room for a true disgust, which may ennoble a man. It was the sight, momentary and unsought, of the pitiable decay of a human body which had been clothed a little before in beauty and pride, that aroused the 'dissatisfaction' or 'disgust' that sent Ignatius Loyola to a life of self-sacrifice. But to dwell long and frequently on the ignoble aspects of our bodily nature, is base, and a treason to humanity. One's manhood resents it. It is refreshing to contrast the healthy and manly tone in which Shakespeare can both acknowledge all the weakness of our poor bodies, and stand in awe-struck admiration too at their nobleness

[1] Sutt. Nip. ii. 5.

[2] Sutt. Nip. iii. 12; Maj. Nik. x. *et pass.*—Such meditation is urged continually.

Science has taught us indeed to see, even in the several organs and the processes of flesh and blood, nothing but what is wonderful and admirable; but the Jewish Psalmist—before the days of the microscope—had struck the highest tone of all, when he thought how his body, from the first, had been fashioned by its Maker, fearfully and wonderfully made.

And if the Christian is ever led to say, as Barrow does in one instance speak (comparing it with the reasonable soul) of 'this feculent lump of organised clay, our body,' yet he teaches us to thank God for (vol. i. p. 200) 'a comely body framed by His curious artifice, various organs fitly proportioned, situated and tempered, for strength, ornament, and motion,' etc., by Him who, 'by His kind disposal, furnishes our palates with variety of delicious fare, entertains our eyes with pleasant spectacles, ravishes our ears with harmonious sounds, perfumes our nostrils with fragrant odours, cheers our spirits with comfortable gales,' etc.[1]

In Buddhism the way of treating the body never varies, so far as I know, from the base point of view which I have described. But there are other considerations, more philosophical and less sensuous, by which 'Nibbidá' is excited, and the disgust with the impermanence of things rises, as in the case of Gotama himself, to a 'noble discontent.'

Once convinced that all things are transitory, and

[1] Augustine taught, and Aquinas confirms (Summ. ii. 2. 9. 4), that 'Scientia' corresponds to the Beatitude of those who mourn, as showing the worthlessness of creatures. Comfort, they teach, comes by the knowledge of the Creator.

anxious to maintain and deepen that conviction, the Buddhist disciple will aim at detaching himself more and more from them: he will carefully avoid giving any object a hold upon him, or allowing himself to take hold of, or rest upon, any external thing. To this end he will guard his senses with the utmost care. The sphere of each sense will be to him a region of danger, and he will be constantly on the watch lest either sense should form a link between him and its object; lest any pleasure or pain should be allowed to establish itself in his consciousness in consequence of the contact of eye, ear, tongue, nose, or thought, with anything seen, or heard, or tasted, or smelt, or thought of.

He is recommended, for this purpose, not to observe—the rules generally take their form from the sense of sight—any detail or characteristic of any object. He should not know, for instance, when he sees a figure, whether it is a man or a woman, whether the object before him is a stone or a mango, a good mango or a bad, lest observing details he should linger on them, and attachment be produced. A curious play on words gives point to this advice. A mark, or characteristic detail, is called in Páli, 'nimittaṁ;' and in regard to this, its strict logical meaning, the disciple should not 'apprehend details,' not be *nimittagáhí*. But the same word had a popular use in reference to the marks of female beauty, and *nimittagáhí* then stands for 'falling in love.' The disciple is to avoid being captivated by

the charms of any object. He must cultivate abstraction, lest attention to details should give room for desire.[1] (A logical method is treated as the means of a moral result.) On the other hand, from another point of view, accurate knowledge of things—viz., of their impermanence—is held to prevent attachment to them.[2]

In the treatment of this subject we meet with a praiseworthy effort to grapple with the practical problem, and to trace the evil of lust to its earliest manifestations, to cut up, as the books constantly say, the root of it. This analysis demands as much admiration as any part of the Buddhist system. The wise man, when any object, which addresses either of the senses comes in contact with his eye, his ear, or other sense, does not notice any point or detail. If he noticed any point or detail in the object presented to his sense, he would be led to dwell on it, to be engrossed by it, to desire it. He guards his senses therefore; and knowing that (sensuous) contact is a link in the chain that leads to sorrow, he covers up his sense and shuts out the impressions. If they assail him he says to himself, 'This is a vain impression, the effect of an unreal appearance of things, which have no permanent being,' and so he throws it off.

A still more subtle way of treating the matter, though less practical, is important, as it has determined the forms of expression which are common in the

[1] Saman. S. 64. [2] Maj. Nik. I, 4.

books, and explains, to some extent, the position of 'name and form' in the Chain of Causation.

What assails the sense is an individual object, not an abstraction. It owes its capacity for assailing the sense to its being definite and particular, and to its being recognised as such. Now when once the mind has identified an object, realised its form and given it name, the mind has committed itself to the influence of that object, has attached itself to it. In order then to be free from the dominion of external objects, we must refuse to identify, we must not compare them, letting the mind pass from one to the other and dwell on each in turn. We must withdraw attention more and more from particular objects of sense, till there is no perception of differences, till we are conscious only of a formless universe, of a colourless infinite, till the idea even of finite or infinite is lost, till no idea whatever remains. This is the intellectual, as the other was the moral abstraction.

In another point of view, which is often taken, detachment from external objects is treated more practically. The cause of sorrow, or one great cause of it, is the absence of desired or loved objects, or the loss of what we love. Things that are loved are the cause of sorrow, whether in seeking and not attaining them, or in having had and losing them. To be indifferent, desiring nothing, to meditate on the worthlessness of all and so to care for none, without want of clothes, food, possessions, this is the happy state.

The sage was great who sat lost in thought while a hundred carts went by so close that the dust was on his robe.[1] But Gotama boasted a greater calm, for while the elements shook around him, and thunder roared and lightning bolts flashed on every side, he had been unconscious of the storm.

It is to secure this detachment, and to procure the training of this character, unhampered by either possessions or disturbances, that wise men find home life too cramped,[2] and go out into the free, open-air life of him who has nothing to lose. They desire to be like the solitary rhinoceros, to sail away like the swan,[3] and be at peace. A multitude of other similes are employed to illustrate the same point.

The monk who has thus overcome desire has cut the strap, the thong, the chain, the bar: he has dammed up the waters; crushed the snake; cut down the forest; he is firm as a pillar; he does not go out like a lamp (quite a different point of view from that in which the metaphor is used of Nirvana); the arrow is drawn out of his wound; the streams are dried; he is like a well-thatched house which no rain can enter. No fuel is added to the fire, or oil to the lamp of lust, the hot vessel is cooled, the tree rooted up. Dearest image of all, he is like[4] the pure lotus leaf to which no water can cling.

The preciousness of seclusion and solitude, and its

[1] Parinibb. Sutta.
[2] Maha Vagga, v. 1. 9.
[3] S. N. i. 3. 6; D. N. i. 7. 27.
[4] See Sutta Nipat, ii. 3; Udan. lxxv.; Sanyut. xii. 51. 18; 52. 3; 53. 3; 55. 5, etc.

necessity to the attainment of insight, form the subject of innumerable sermons, and a large number of Jataka stories are devoted to illustrating it.[1]

The finished monk will have no impulses to bad or good. Love itself, in its active sense, he will avoid. He will be without desire, cultivating only calm.[2]

It is with a view to this detachment that the monk is to have no belongings beyond the four requisites, clothing, food, bedding, and medicine, and these are to be of the simplest and least desirable kind. And with these he is to be content.[3]

While he uses each, he is to make a special effort of self-recollection (sati), reminding himself that he takes them only as necessaries and that he does not cling to them. As he takes up his robe he is to say to himself, 'I take this merely to protect my body from heat and cold and other inconveniences,' and thus incalculable merit is attained. 'If a monk in the use of his robe, his alms-food, his dwelling, his medicines and condiments, exercises unlimited recollectedness of mind, unlimited in each of those cases will be his accumulation of good deeds and merits, and reward of joy, bliss-producing, heaven-ensuring, leading to all delight and joy, and happiness, and pleasure, and bliss.' It is as impossible to calculate the quantity of merit in each of these acts as to calculate the waters in the sea.[4]

It is natural at first sight to compare this search

[1] See Akankh. Sutta, *S.B.E.* xi. 210, etc.

[2] Dh. i. 16, p. 56; S. N. v. 14-206; S. N. iv. 10, p. 162.

[3] Angut. iv. 12. 25. 26.

[4] Angut. iv. li.

for retirement with that of the Christian monk, and even to compare the 'detachment' of the Buddhist with that of the Christian. And there have no doubt been Christian monks whose solitude was no better than this. But if the two *ideals* are to be compared—and that is what is to our present purpose—it will at once appear that the contrast is more important than the resemblance; for the Buddhist's solitude is a withdrawal from all things to nothing, the Christian's, from all other things to God.

In seeking for freedom by diminishing the number of necessaries, and for opportunity by seclusion and leisure, the Christian ascetic agrees with the Buddhist. But they differ *toto cælo* in their views both of what they leave and what they seek. The Buddhist leaves the world and mortifies the body because he thinks them worthless or even evil in themselves; the Christian leaves the world because he himself is sinful, and liable through his own fault to make a bad use of God's good creatures; and in leaving them he feels that he sacrifices them to God. Still more striking is the contrast in regard to what each seeks. The Christian would go, if he could, away from every created thing, that he might go to God, the One and infinite Good. He strives to shut the senses, to shut out the world, to forget self, because he has in view an infinite field for the exercise of all his faculties upon a perfect object. The Buddhist would, in theory, withdraw his faculties from all exercise whatever.[1]

[1] But see in the next chapter a better aspect of this in application to practice.

It is impossible to imagine a greater interval between two ideals, for the interval is strictly infinite; between that which contains only the negative, and that which adds to it the infinite positive.

Here is the climax of Buddhist attainment :—

'Then the Blessed One entered into the first stage of deep meditation. And rising out of the first stage he passed into the second. And rising out of the second he passed into the third. And rising out of the third stage he passed into the fourth. And rising out of the fourth stage of deep meditation he entered into the state of mind to which the infinity of space is alone present. And passing out of the mere consciousness of the infinity of space he entered into the state of mind to which the infinity of thought is alone present. And passing out of the mere consciousness of the infinity of thought he entered into a state of mind to which nothing at all was specially present. And passing out of the consciousness of no special object he fell into a state between consciousness and unconsciousness. And passing out of the state between consciousness and unconsciousness he fell into a state in which the consciousness both of sensations and of ideas had wholly passed away.' [1]

Contrast with this the Christian aspiration.

'If to any the tumult of the flesh were hushed, hushed the images of earth, and waters, and air, hushed also the poles of heaven, yea the very soul be hushed to herself, and by not thinking on self

[1] Parinibb. Sutta, in *Sacred Books*, vol. xi.

surmount self, hushed all dreams and imaginary revelations, every tongue and every sign, and whatsoever exists only in transition, since if any could hear, all these say, We made not ourselves, but He made us that abideth for ever. If then having uttered this, they too should be hushed, having roused only our ears to Him Who made them, and He alone speak, not by them, but by Himself, that we may hear His Word, not through any tongue of flesh, nor Angel's voice, nor sound of thunder, nor in the dark riddle of a similitude, but, might hear Whom in these things we love, might hear His Very Self without these (as we two now strained ourselves, and in swift thought touched on that Eternal Wisdom, which abideth over all) ;—could this be continued on, and other visions of kind far unlike be withdrawn, and this one ravish, and absorb, and wrap up its beholder amid these inward joys, so that life might be for ever like that one moment of understanding which now we sighed after ; were not this, Enter into thy Master's joy ?'[1]

Note on Transmigration.

The idea of an endless succession of lives, through which every individual is passing, occupies a prominent place in Buddhist thought. The disciple is encouraged to dwell upon this idea until the mere sense of weariness from contemplating so interminable a series arouses his disgust. Sickening at the sight, he resolves to have nothing to do with those external objects, or even with those

[1] St. Augustine, *Confessions*, Bk. ix. (Oxford translation).

internal acts of consciousness, with which the tedious rotation of birth and death is associated.

It is not the idea of retribution, by the transmigration of a greedy man into a hog, etc., nor even that of variety, in one being passing through many forms (though both these ideas are admitted), but it is the idea of *weary interminableness* which is the ruling aspect of transmigration in Buddhist thought. The books labour to excite this idea by a multitude of illustrations, of which a number are collected in the fifteenth book of Sanyutta Nikaya.

If a piece of clay the size of a jujube seed were taken to represent your father, another similar one your grandfather, a third his father, and so on, the whole earth would be used up before the series was exhausted. The tears each man has shed over his fathers amount to more water than all the oceans. Every one has been every one's father, mother, son, etc. Certain ascetics were told that the blood they had shed when slaughtered as oxen, goats, birds, dogs, etc., or the blood they had shed when having their hands cut off as thieves, exceeded all the waters of all the seas. The bones of one individual in the course of an 'age' (Kalpa) make a great mountain. A Kalpa is so long that if a solid mountain were lightly brushed with a cloth once in a hundred thousand years, it would be worn away long before a single Kalpa was exhausted.[1] Yet we are told that few beings in proportion are born again as men; they are as a nailful of dust to the whole earth.[2] Man is hurried through this series of lives by a mechanical necessity. He 'falls' out of one life into another, according to his deeds, as a stick thrown into the air inevitably falls, whether it fall on one end or on the other, or on the middle (Sanyut. xv. 9 *et passim*).

Is there not good reason then to be disgusted with the round of lives in which beings run their weary and endless course? And is it not worth while to get free from it?

As soon as one sees the cause of it all—that death is due to birth, and birth to being, etc.—sees, in fact, the principle that suffering is inevitably associated with existence,—then one is free. Once seen, the evil principle has no longer hold on a man. He is 'knowledge-freed.' The mass of past sorrow is incalculable, but

[1] On the length of a Kalpa, and its beginning and ending, see Angut. iv. 159.

[2] Sanyut. xx. 2. For the size of the world, see Angut. iv. 45.

that which remains to one who has taken the first step in the Buddhist course is insignificant.[1]

With these ideas are connected two of the most celebrated and most striking of the Buddhist utterances; that said to have been uttered by Gotama at the moment of his attaining the insight, 'Anekajátisansáram,' etc., and the less elaborate one, which is represented as bursting from the lips of learner after learner, as he comes to see the transitoriness of all (compounded) things, and the necessity of their decay. The latter may be thus translated :—

'All things[2] are unabiding,
Birth, death—their law is this :
They come to birth ; they perish ;
End all,[3] and that is bliss.'

(In spite of the poetical grandeur of the former passage, 'through the series of many births have I run, etc.,' and in spite of the old grammatical forms in it, I think it belongs to a comparatively late stage of the Pitaka literature. It is an elaborate collection of stereotyped metaphors. The identification of the 'house-maker,' or *karma*, with Mára (to whom the phrase 'dittho si,' 'thou art seen through,' is regularly applied), is alien to the earlier ideas of Maha Vagga. The metaphor of the house and rafters, though often found in later Suttas, is not in the Vinaya.)

[1] Sanyut. xiii. 1. 2, where this is stupidly multiplied into eleven similar chapters, as the 'Uddánaṁ' naïvely states.

[2] 'Things.' Strictly, 'things made up by composition of elements.' Except by this paraphrase the word cannot be translated by any narrower word than 'things.'

[3] Literally, 'their sinking to rest' is bliss.

CHAPTER X

THE VICES

THE cultivation of solitude is habitually recommended in the Buddhist books, as I have said in the last chapter, with a view to unmeaning, and, indeed, impossible states of abstraction. And this is always treated as the higher way, and to this the advanced disciple aspires, leaving behind him, as if it were merely a preliminary achievement, the rooting out of passion. This earlier stage, however, of the moral course is the only part which is of practical value, and, happily—though it has not the chief place in the great Suttas—it is not overlooked. The passages which keep upon this lower or more true level, and deal with the eradication of ordinary passions, place the principle of 'detachment' in a much more favourable light.

The disciple who keeps in view the impermanence of things and has no attachment to them will neither desire nor resent. He wants nothing, and nothing hurts him. Lust, therefore, and hatred and anger are got rid of. One of the best parts of the Buddhist morality, on the side of the avoidance of what is bad,

is the part which deals with the destruction of lust, spite, and the other evil ways or evil conditions; of anger, pride, and the love of pleasure and gain. Lust or passion and spite or hatred are the two principal of these, but to these stupidity and fear are generally added. The usual formula is represented by the lines :—

> 'Whoso transgresses right, by lust, by hatred, by stupidity, or by fear,
> His reputation wanes away like the moon in the dark half of the month.'[1]

Sometimes a more general word, 'Passion' (Rágo), is substituted for 'lust,' and sometimes for 'fear' we find 'pride.'[2] 'Stupidity' here means originally 'confusion of mind,' the want of self-respect and self-command which goes with a bad conscience and with loss of reputation. Occasionally, however, it is taken as denseness and inability to see into the profounder truths; this is an application of it to the case of monks.[3] In the Maha Vagga there is a curious account of the way in which a certain Sona, who had attained to perfect insight, thought fit to display to the Buddha ('modestly and without obtruding self') the proof of his attainment. The point which he chose for his dissertation was this: That the ill conditions, of which he enumerated only three, passion, hatred, and stupidity (Rhys Davids here renders it 'delusions'), are not eradicated for the sake of faith,

[1] Angut. iv. 17, *et passim*.
[2] Angut. iv. 66 (Rágo . . . máno); Angut. iv. 117 (Rágo . . . mado).
[3] Angut. iv. 158.

or for the sake of reputation and being welcomed and entertained, or for the sake of merit; in the accomplished disciple these evil conditions are simply absent; he has ceased to need any motive for resisting them; they do not exist for him at all.[1] This exposition of Sona's was highly approved by the Buddha.

In the oldest passages[2] 'fear' is seldom, if ever, introduced, though it is very likely that the four-fold division, in which 'fear' is included, is older than Buddhism, and applied originally to the duties of kings and judges. In the latest books definitions and illustrations of the four ill-conditions abound.

Another cognate classification is that of the five Niváranas or Hindrances: greed, malice, sloth, pride, and doubt.[3] This is somewhat more technical and characteristically Buddhist than the last. Still more technical is the classification under four Yogas,[4] or 'attachments,' those of love of pleasure, love of existence, false doctrine, and ignorance. 'There are four attachments, mendicants. What are the four? The attachment of the love of sensual pleasure, that of the love of existence, that of heresy, that of ignorance. What, mendicants, is the attachment of the love of pleasure? When a person does not recognise in their true nature the up-coming and the down-going of sensual pleasures, the enjoyment of them, the danger of them, and the way out of them—

[1] Maha Vagga, v. 1. 20. [2] *e.g.* Maha Vagga, vi. 31. 6 and above.
[3] Dig. Nig. ii. (Samaññaphala Sutta) 68, p. 71.
[4] Angut. iv. 10, etc.

in him who knows not all these, in regard to the objects of sensual pleasures, there is a sickness for pleasure,[1] a delight in pleasure, a love of pleasure, a fainting for pleasure, a thirst for pleasure, a fever for pleasure, which is sunk in pleasure, and goes along with the desire for pleasure—that is called, mendicants, the attachment of the love of sensual pleasure.'[1]

The same sentence is then repeated, with 'existence' and with 'heresy' in turn, in the place of 'pleasure.' In the fourth sentence the 'six regions of contact,' that is, the objects of sense and imagination, are substituted for ignorance.[2] What was a forcible and appropriate sentence in its original application becomes somewhat unmeaning in these forced applications.

Distinct again from these, and more concise and exhaustive, is the classification of defects under the heads of the three, or the four, corruptions or ásavas, Love of Pleasure, Love of Existence, Heresy, and Ignorance. These technical classifications are not consistent with one another in regard to the order in which they place the different vices, but there is one which purports definitely to assign the order in which each vice is rooted out by the disciple. This is the list of the Ten Bonds, by which men are bound to continued existence.[3]

The first three are of the nature of heresies, belief in one's own personal existence and claims,

[1] Or should we read 'passion for pleasure,' 'Kámarágo'?
[2] Angut. iv. 10. [3] See Childers, *Dictionary*, s.v. Yogo and Saṁyojanaṁ.

doubts, misuse of low kinds of religious rites; these are the first faults to be got rid of. The two next are love of pleasure and hatred, while the other five, the suppression of which is the highest moral attainment, are passion for what has form, passion for what has not form, pride (of honour), pride (of attainment), and ignorance. The reader will see in this a certain advance in analysis. The disciple must first desire to shake off personal existence, and must be a convinced follower of Buddha, rejecting all Brahmanical and superstitious rites; he will then grapple with the more obvious and grosser vices, lust and hatred; but the eradication of more spiritual faults will come later, and the destruction of ignorance, by direct insight, or knowledge, comes last of all. At the same time, we observe, that in regard especially to the position assigned to intellectual defects, heresy and doubt, this method differs from the rest. It is evident that different Suttas and, to some extent, different books of the Pitakas, represent different systems of teaching and different stages of analysis.

We find two modes of grouping mixed together, for instance, in the following passage. It contains a clear statement of the Four Stages of attainment, or Four Paths, to which I shall refer later on.

'Is it for the sake of realising these exercises of meditation that mendicants lead the religious life under the Buddha?'

'No, Maháli, it is not,' etc.[1] 'There are other

[1] In all these places the original repeats the whole sentence.

principles higher and more advanced than these, for the sake of realising which mendicants lead the religious life under me.'

'What are these?' etc.

'By destruction of the three bonds a mendicant becomes "entered into the stream," and can never fall to a lower condition, is fixed (in the right way), is certainly destined to the attainment of perfect knowledge. This, Mahali, is one of the higher and more advanced principles,' etc.

'Again, further, Mahali: a mendicant, by the destruction of the three bonds, and by reduction (to a minimum) of Passion, Hate, and Stupidity (or confusion),[1] becomes a "Once-comer"—after one return to this world he will make an end of sorrow. This, Mahali,' etc.

'Again, further, Mahali: a mendicant, by destruction of the five bonds which belong to this side,[2] becomes "supernatural,"—he enters into Nirvana direct from an upper world; he cannot return to this world. This,' etc.

'Further, again, Mahali: by destruction of the corruptions, a mendicant attains even in this world by his own knowledge and direct insight the emancipation of the mind, the corruptionless emancipation of pure knowledge. This is,' etc.

'These, Mahali, are the higher and more ad-

[1] Stupidity is out of place here.

[2] Concerning only life in this and some other lower worlds—that of the lower gods, etc.

vanced principles, for the sake of realising which mendicants lead the religious life under me.'

'Is there, Sir, a way, is there a course, for the realisation of these principles (or conditions)?'

'There is, Mahali, a way,' etc.

'What, Sir, is the way?' etc.

'It is this sacred Eightfold Way, namely, Right Belief,' etc. 'This, Mahali, is the way, this the course, for the realisation of these conditions.'[1]

A division still more plain and untechnical is that of Act, Word, and Thought. This is often repeated, but little use is made of it. I have seen no passage which touched on the relation of thought to word and to action. As a rule, the distinction is used only to subdivide, without illustrating, the other groups. For instance, in the treatment of anger, we read:[2]—

'Beware of bodily anger, and control thy body! Leave the sins of the body: with thy body practise virtue.

'Beware of the anger of the tongue, and control thy tongue,' etc.

'Beware of the anger of the mind, and control,' etc.

A much better use of the distinction is found[3] where unchastity is reckoned as the defilement of the body; lying, slander, and abuse as the defilement of the tongue; and lust, malice, sloth, pride, and doubt as the defilement of the mind.

[1] Maháli Sutta, D. N. vi. p. 156.

[2] Dh. 231; *Sacred Books of the East*, x. p. 59A.

[3] Angut. iii. 119. 1.

But it is time to have done with these lists and enumerations. They cannot be omitted, for they form a very large part of the whole. But I will try to show what flesh there is on these bones.

It is by its condemnation of hatred and ill-will that the Buddhist morality (of the books) is most popularly and favourably known. Such passages as the following it is a pleasure to quote:—

'He who holds back anger like a rolling chariot, him I call a real driver; other people are but holding the reins.

'Let a man overcome anger by love, let him overcome evil by good; let him overcome the greedy by liberality, the liar by truth.[1]

'Him I call a Brahmana who is tolerant with the intolerant, mild with fault-finders, and free from passion among the passionate.

'Him I call a Brahmana from whom anger and hatred, pride and envy, have dropped like a mustard seed from the point of a needle.'[2]

But we shall see more of this when we come to treat of its opposite, 'kindness.'

Greediness and avarice are often vigorously condemned; they are especially temptations of the householder.

'The greedy in their selfishness do not leave sorrow, lamentation, and avarice: therefore the wise recluses leave greediness to wander in sight of the

[1] Dh. 222. 3; *Sacred Books of the East*, x. 58.
[2] *Ibid.* 406. 407.

security (of Nirvána).'[1] The connection is the same in other places,[2] when the good householder is described as 'free in giving away, with hands accustomed to make offerings, fond of giving, fond of the distribution of gifts;' avarice is regarded as a 'dirty' vice.

Sloth, which is not exactly the same as want of religious effort, is not tolerated (in the books). It is said to be produced and increased by dissatisfied, drowsy, yawning stupidity, caused by eating and by attachment of mind;[3] and is overcome by energy, activity, and effort.[4] It is associated with sensual pleasure, malice, pride, and doubt.[5]

To my mind the morality of these books appears to great advantage in its treatment of the vice of *pride*. The prominent place which it occupies in the list has been already shown:[6] 'Let him not be proud, for that is not called bliss by the good. Let him not, therefore, think himself better (than others, or) low, or equal to others; questioned by different people, let him not adorn himself.[7]

'The person who, without being asked, praises his own virtue and (holy) works to others, him the good call ignoble, one who praises himself.'[8]

[1] S. N. iv. 6. See *Sacred Books of the East*, xii. p. 155.
[2] Angut. iii. 42. [3] Angut. i. 2. 3. [4] Angut. i. 2. 8.
[5] Angut. iii. 57. 1; and *ibid.* 119.
[6] See Tevijja S.; *Sacred Books of the East*, xi. 182; and Sámañ. S. 68. 2, etc. etc.
[7] *i.e.* boast of his family, etc., S. N. iv. 14; *Sacred Books of the East*, x. p. 175. [8] *Sacred Books of the East*, iv. 3, p. 149.

'The wise man is indifferent to both praise and blame.[1] When saluted, he is not elated.[2] He knows, but is not proud of his knowledge.[3] He is readier to take note of his own faults than of those of others.'[4] As it is very beautifully said: 'One should be ready to tell one's faults, for the sense of shame swiftly fades. The conscience of a monk should be as tender, his sense of shame as keen, as that of a virgin bride.'[5]

False pretension to supernatural attainments is among the unpardonable sins (p. 192), and all false professions and pretensions are condemned.[6]

Especially, the monks are warned against being elated by honours, entertainments, reputation, and the like. The writers are never tired of repeating a proverb to this effect: The fruit of the plantain (banana) is its bane, so is honour the bane of the monk. This was especially illustrated by the fall of Devadatta.[7]

This danger from the gain, entertainment, and reputation, which virtue itself secures, is associated with pride and lying. It is dreadful; a bait by which men are caught; men are entangled by it as a long-wooled goat is by thorns; many go to hell through

[1] Brahmaj. S., *ab init.*; D. N. I. 1. 3, etc.
[2] S. N. ii. 13.
[3] Angut. iv. 185.
[4] Dh. 50.
[5] Angut. iv. 74. paraphrased. I have given the sense of the passage, but have expressed it more delicately.
[6] Tevijja S., Cetok. S., etc.; *Sacred Books of the East*, xi. pp. 195, 227.
[7] Angut. iv. 68, etc. etc.

it. It eats into the skin, and into the flesh, etc.;[1] it is like a hair rope on the leg.[2]

[1] The expression used about the love of a father for a son, in the account of the admission of Rahula, *supra*, p. 59.

[2] Sanyut. xvii. xviii., where there are over forty Sutras upon it.

CHAPTER XI

THE VIRTUES

IT is a curious thing, considering how fond the Buddhist books are of lists of vices and of mental attainments, that they have no corresponding lists of virtues. There are the four ill-conditions, the ten bonds, the three corruptions, and a multitude more lists of faults. There are the four meditations, the four supernatural attainments, the ten forms of intellectual strength, and so on. But I know of no numerical list of virtues.[1] So much the better. We can follow an arrangement of our own without doing any violence to the Buddhist method.

First, let us take, what is the glory of Buddhism, the doctrine of *loving-kindness*, or *mettam* (maitreya). The word meant originally friendship, and it is mainly by Buddhism, I believe, that its meaning has been enlarged. The next Buddha, as later Buddhist belief

[1] The ten Perfections (páramitá) are no exception to this, as they concern only Buddhas; but they form the nearest approach to a list of virtues, and are by no means a scientific arrangement: the place occupied by knowledge (paññá) is alone enough to show this. These ten Perfections are those of giving, conduct (or obedience to the precepts), leaving the world, knowledge, energy, patience, truth, firmness, loving-kindness, resignation. 'The attainment of Buddhahood with all its superhuman attributes (*e.g.* omniscience) is the result or consequence of the vast accumulation of merit during the exercise of the páramitás in anterior births.'—Childers, *Dict.* s.v.

holds, is to be named Maitrí; or 'the loving one.' Whether this expectation is regarded as moulded by the worship of Mitra or Mithras, or as an unconscious prophecy of the coming of Him who is Love, it is at any rate a proof of the place which this virtue once occupied in Buddhist thought.

I propose to discuss it under four heads: In its widest sense, as loving-kindness and sympathy, and in three special senses, as the spirit of unity, as meekness, as unwillingness to hurt.

§ 1. Gotama the Buddha is described as having devoted himself to preaching his doctrine out of kindness to gods and men, out of compassion. He is often represented as looking abroad with supernatural power of sight on the worlds of gods and men, and sending out his compassion towards all. But with the exception of this general governing principle of his life, he is not often presented to us as an example of this virtue in any particular action. No particular act of kindness, or at any rate none that cost him anything, is narrated of him as a historical person.

In manner, he is represented as extremely courteous and winning; in his method of teaching, considerate and patient. To opponents he was generous. Several times, when a rich convert proposed at once to transfer to Gotama and his monks the liberality which he had been bestowing on members of rival religious orders, Gotama is said to have dissuaded him.[1] When insulted, as the later books make him often to have

[1] Maj. Nik. lvi. etc.

been, by rival teachers, he was a pattern of patience. For the jealous Fire-worshipper, who feared Gotama's higher reputation would outshine his own on his own festival, Gotama showed consideration by withdrawing from the scene.[1] Even towards his bitter and murderous enemy, Devadatta, he maintained an attitude of perfect patience and dignity. For the feelings of Cunda, who gave him the pork which brought on his final illness, he showed a touching tenderness. Towards his affectionate but rather slow-witted friend, Ananda, Gotama is at once severe and considerate.

But with the general exception above noted, there is not ascribed to the historical Gotama any striking or peculiar illustration of loving-kindness. On his supposed conduct in previous 'births,' the legends have lavished every extravagance in attributing heroic actions to hares and stags and elephants. But they have left the Gotama of this age in the simplicity of the facts. What is the explanation?

I believe that as regards the older records the reason is that they tell the truth. As regards the later narratives, Professor Oldenberg's explanation may be correct. The Buddha had attained that to which moral achievements are only a means. He had 'done all that had to be done.' After he had become a Buddha, any action but that of teaching would have been out of place. So the exercise on a vast scale of all the virtues was relegated to the region of former births, in former ages, and under former Buddhas.

[1] Maha Vagga, i. 19.

when he who was to be the Buddha of this age was a Bodhisat, or being destined to be a Buddha.

But there is a further reason. The loving-kindness of Buddhism is rather a temper than a motive of action. It may have existed to the full in the Buddha without exhibiting itself in act. As a temper, it is the characteristic aim of his teaching.

He is represented as teaching that a little love is better than vast gifts.[1] It leads to high condition in future births.[2] In the Kassapa Síhanáda Sutta, Gotama discusses the common saying, 'It is hard to be a Brahman or a Samana.' In contrast with the labours and austerities to which this saying refers, Gotama says, 'The mendicant who cultivates loving-kindness in his heart, without enmity and without malice, and by destruction of the corruptions attains even in this life by his own insight the realisation of the corruptionless emancipation of the mind, the emancipation of knowledge, he, Kassapa, is rightly called a Brahman and a Samana.'[3]

'He lets his mind pervade one quarter of the world with thoughts of love, and so the second, and so the third, and so the fourth. And thus the whole wide world, above, below, around, and everywhere, does he continue to pervade with heart of love, far-reaching, grown great and beyond measure.

'Just Vasettha, as a mighty trumpeter makes himself heard, and that without difficulty, in all the four

[1] Sanyut. xx. 4.
[2] Angut. iv. 190.
[3] Dig. Nik. viii. 16.

directions ; even so of all things that have shape or life, there is not one that he passes by or leaves aside, but regards them all with mind set free and deep-felt love.'[1]

'As a mother at the risk of her life watches over her own child, her only child, so also let every one cultivate a boundless (friendly) mind towards all beings; and let him cultivate goodwill towards all the world, . . standing, walking, or sitting, or lying, as long as he be awake, let him devote himself to this mind; this (way of) living, they say, is the best in the world.'[2]

§ 2. The spirit of *unity* and concord is a matter to which a very important place is given. In the biography of Gotama we have seen (p. 68) how he is said to have taken occasion, at the end of his career, from the case of the Vajjians, to urge unity upon his followers. But out of many passages that might be cited, the most charming is one which recurs several times, but which I may abridge from the translation of the tenth book of the Maha Vagga.[3] Anuradha, Nanduja, and Kimbila were three monks who lived together in the Eastern Bamboo Park. The Buddha visited them, and after asking, as was his custom, after their circumstances, he said: 'And do you live in unity and concord, without quarrels, like milk and water (mixed together), and looking at each other with friendly eyes?' 'Certainly, Lord, we do so,'

[1] Tevijja Sutta, iii. 1, translated by Rhys Davids in *Sacred Books of the East* vol. xi. p. 201.

[2] Sutta Nipata, i. 8 ; *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. x. ii. p. 25.

[3] Maha Vagga, x. 4 ; also in Maj. Nik. xxxi. etc. ; *Sacred Books of the East* vol. xvii. p. 309, etc.

etc. 'And in what way do you live thus' etc.? Then each in turn replied for himself, and all used the same words: 'I think, Lord, it is all gain to me, indeed it is high bliss for me indeed to live in the company of brethren like these. Thus, Lord, do I exercise towards these venerable brethren friendliness[1] in my actions both openly and in secret. I exercise (towards them) friendliness in my words, and friendliness in my thoughts, both openly and in secret. And I think thus, Lord, "What if I were to give up my own will and to live only according to the will of these venerable brethren?" Thus, Lord, I give up my own will and live only according to the will of these venerable brethren. *Our bodies, Lord, are different, but our minds, I think, have become one.*'

In treating of the use of speech we shall see with what fulness and earnestness the duty of saying what will promote unity is insisted on.[2]

§ 3. The temper of *meekness* is closely akin to these, and may be called perhaps the favourite theme of Buddhist writers, whether in discourse or in 'birth story or fairy tale. Its motto is the couplet:[3] 'Hatred is not appeased by hatred at any time; but it is appeased by unhatred: this law is eternal.' And the verse that precedes this is excellent: 'He abused me, he beat me, he defeated me, he took what was mine;' 'In those who do not cherish that, hatred is appeased.'

[1] *Mettaṁ.* The same word which I have rendered, in its widest use, by 'loving-kindness.'

[2] See the Sutta translated on p. 332.

[3] Dh. i. 1. 5.

Instead of quoting any more of such sentiments, I must give in illustration of them a sketch of the story of Dighávu. It was told to some monks among whom quarrels had arisen.

The great king Brahmadatta of Benares set out to war against Díghíti, the poor king of the comparatively insignificant realm of Kosala. Dighiti offered no resistance, but fled in disguise with his queen to the neighbourhood of Benares, and Brahmadatta took possession of his realm and all he had. When it came to Brahmadatta's knowledge that the fugitive king and his wife were living in disguise close to his city, he sent for them and had them both put to death with the utmost cruelty. Their only child, Dighavu, whom for safety's sake they had caused to live apart from them, happened to be coming to pay his parents a visit, when he met them thus being led out to execution. As soon as his father, Dighiti, late king of Kosala, saw his boy, he said to him these enigmatic words: 'Do not look long, my dear Dighavu, and do not look short; for not by hatred, my dear Dighavu, is hatred appeased, by not-hatred, my dear Dighavu, hatred is appeased.'[1]

Having done what he could for the funeral of his parents, Dighavu went into the forest. There he cried and wept to his heart's content. Then he wiped

[1] Maha Vagga, x. 2, *S.B.E.* xii. 298, etc. This story is interesting in many ways. It is a tale of old mythical times, but is not a 'birth story,' *i.e.* the hero is not identified with a previous life of the Buddha. Further, in its close resemblance in several points to the history of David in his relations with Saul, it is one among many indications that the Old Testament narratives, as well as the Greek myths, had reached the India of Buddhism.

his tears, entered the town of Benares, and persuaded the kings' elephant trainer to accept him as an apprentice. 'And young Dighavu,' said Gotama to the monks, 'arose in the night at dawn's time and sung in the elephant stables in a beautiful voice and played upon the lute. And King Brahmadatta heard his singing and playing on the lute, and asked who it was who sang and played so well. They told him it was the elephant trainer's boy, and brought him to the king. He played and sang before the king, and charmed him, and became his favourite attendant; and, ere long, O monks, King Brahmadatta of Kási gave to young Dighavu a position of trust.'

One day when the king went hunting Dighavu was acting as charioteer. He contrived to get separated from the rest of the chariots, and after a long drive the king grew tired, and lay down to rest with his head in Dighavu's lap. Then thought the lad, now is the time to satisfy my hatred against the murderer of my parents and the despoiler of our realm; and he drew his sword. But the dying words of his father came into his mind, and he put up his sword. A second time and a third time he drew it, and again returned it to its sheath.

At that moment the king awoke, having had, as he said, a frightful dream; the son of Dighiti, he dreamt, had come upon him with his sword. 'I, O king,' said the lad, 'am Dighavu, Dighiti's son. You have murdered my parents and robbed us of our realm, now is the time for me to satisfy my hatred.' 'Grant me my

life, dear Dighavu,' cried the great king, falling at his feet. The young man spared him, returned to his post of charioteer, and drove the king home.

And Brahmadatta asked Dighavu the meaning of those words of his father, King Dighiti, 'Do not look long, and do not look short,' and the rest. "Not long," he replied, 'means, let not your hatred last long, and "Not short" means, do not be hasty to fall out with your friends.' The other words his conduct had already illustrated. And Brahmadatta restored to Dighavu his father's realm and goods, and gave him his own daughter to be his wife.

§ 4. *Consideration for animals* must have mention here, for the books in very many places teach it, not merely in connection with the rule against taking life, but as a form of kindness. Would that it were a rule for the practical conduct of Buddhists now! Unhappily, it is matter of universal observation in Ceylon, that the very rule against destroying life appears to be taken as the sanction for any extent of cruelty which does not involve killing. But it was not so, in theory at least, with the writers of the Pitakas, nor with the compilers of those Jatakas of which the people are still so fond. In those 'birth stories,' a genuine sympathy for animal life, with that racy rustic humour which accompanies it, is often made the means of giving point to the moral, that the dumb animals claim of us, not merely the cold technical avoidance of killing, but friendliness that will neither hurt them nor cause them fear.[1]

[1] Ahinsá and Abhayam.

It is carried to a fantastic excess in the tenderness for vegetable life, which is required at least of monks, under the larger rules of conduct.[1] This belongs, I fancy, to the later and 'Rabbinical,' so to compare it, stages of the system. In one of the oldest books, we find Gotama inclined to treat as a vulgar error, or at least as a thing unproved, the notion of vegetable 'life.'[2]

We shall have occasion to touch on this matter again; here I will only notice, though it may be scarcely relevant, a curious passage about love or kindness to the whole race of snakes, which occurs in more than one place. In it the sacred word 'mettam' is bestowed abundantly on every sort and tribe of serpent, with the addition of a wish that none of them should hurt the speaker. It is, in fact, a charm, or 'pirit,' against snakes, which has been boldly dragged into the company of Buddhist moral maxims.[3]

'At one time the Buddha was dwelling at Savatthi in the Jetavana, Anathapindika's park, and at that time a certain monk had been bitten by a serpent in Savatthi and had died. A number of monks came where the Buddha was and saluted him, and took their seats respectfully beside him; and, as they sat respectfully beside him, those monks said to the Buddha—

'Here, Lord, in Savatthi, a monk has been bitten by a serpent and has died.'

[1] For instance in the Sutta translated on p. 332.
[2] Maha Vagga, v. 6. 1. [3] Angut. iv. 11.

'That monk, probably, O monks, had not radiated forth loving-kindness on the four royal families of snakes. If that monk, O monks, had radiated forth loving-kindness on the four royal families of snakes, that monk, O monks, would not have been bitten by a snake and died.' 'And what are the four royal families of snakes?'

'The Virupakha royal snake family, the Erápatha, the Chabyáputta, and the Kanhágotamaka royal snake family. Now, probably, monks, that monk had not etc. . . . if he had, etc., he would not, etc. I command you, monks, to radiate loving-kindness on the four royal families of snakes for the protection of yourselves, for the guarding of yourselves, for a charm to keep yourselves safe.'

Then follow the verses:—

'My love is on the Virúpakhas, on the Erápathas is my love,
My love is on the Chabyaputtas, and on the Kanhágotamakas;
My love is on the footless ones, on the two-footed ones is my love;
My love is on the four-footed, on the many-footed is my love.
May no footless one hurt me, may there hurt me no two-footed,
May no four-footed one hurt me, may there hurt me no many-footed one!
May all beings, all that live and all that are, universally
See all happiness, and may no sort of harm befall!'

And then in prose:—

'Infinite is the Buddha, infinite is the Doctrine, infinite is the Community; finite are the creeping things, the snakes and scorpions, the centipedes, the woolly-bellies (spiders) and lizards, and the mice. My protection is made, my charm is made! let the creatures depart. Glory to the Buddha, glory to the seven perfect Buddhas, say I!'

Such is the sixty-seventh Sutta of the fourth division of the Anguttara Nikáya. But nowadays the number of the creeping things, in Ceylon at least, is no longer finite.

Would that the Buddhists of the present day would more frequently charm their animals with love! The bare rule against killing commands little of our admiration; but the kind-heartedness which finds in the dumb creatures something to love and sympathise with—fellow-feeling for all that can feel—this has a wonderful attraction. There is in it something that wins the love of men, so that those who are kind to animals are called humane.

The sentiment of sympathy for animal life is found not only in the Pitakas and Jatakas. It pervades, as we shall see, the inscriptions of Asoka, who seems, if we may judge from the chronological order of his edicts, to have grasped this first among Buddhist principles. He not only professed and enjoined regard for animal life, but instituted hospitals, as he says, throughout India for brutes as well as for men, and planted the herbs which would be useful for their treatment. His kindly action found imitation among the Buddhist kings of Ceylon, notably in Buddhadása, whose provision for the medical treatment of animals, and his extraordinary skill and benevolence in personally attending them, form an amusing episode in the Mahavansa (chap. xxxvii.).

Here it may be noted that the credit of having first founded hospitals belongs undoubtedly to Bud-

dhism. Nor can any reader, who has before him the passages which we have been considering in this chapter, claim for either Old or New Testament the exclusive communication to man of the theory of disinterested kindness and the law of love. The same Holy Spirit who wrote our Scriptures gave to some of the Buddhist teachers no despicable measure of insight into these truths.

But it was not till that Holy Spirit animated the Christian Church, that a community was formed in which these truths became a powerful—I might almost say an appreciable—factor in human life.

Much emphasis is laid in the Buddhist teaching on *filial piety* and reverence for old age. These were genuine Brahman virtues, as is acknowledged in the following passage:—

'Those families have a place with Brahma in which the sons offer religious honours to their parents in the sacred chamber; these families have a place with the teachers of old, with those to whom sacrifice is due.

'For "Brahmas" is a title of fathers and mothers, "teachers of old" is a title of fathers and mothers, "worthy of sacrifice" is a title of fathers and mothers.

'Why? Because fathers and mothers are great benefactors to their sons, their introducers, feeders, and guides in this world.

'. . . Therefore, let the good man honour and succour them with food and drink, with clothing and lodging, with rubbing, with bathing, with washing of

the feet; for waiting thus on father and mother, good men praise him here, and after death he rejoices in heaven.[1]

'The gift of the whole world with all its wealth would be no adequate return to parents for all that they have done.'[2]

This teaching is touchingly illustrated in the following story:—

A certain monk had a quantity of robes in his possession. They ought, of course, to have been placed at the disposal of the Community; but he proposed to give them to his father and mother. The other monks told this to the Buddha, and he replied, 'Since they are his father and mother, what can we say, O Bhikkhus, though he give them to them. I allow you, O Bhikkhus, to give (robes in such a case) to your parents.'[3] Among those who lose in life is the rich man who fails to support his aged parents.[4] He is reckoned as an outcast.[5] There are said to be four ways in which a man goes altogether wrong, and is foolish and unwise and bad, and destroys and ruins himself, and is guilty and regarded as guilty by the wise, and produces great demerit—misconduct towards mother, misconduct towards father, misconduct towards a Buddha, misconduct towards the disciples of Buddha. He is blamed by the wise here, and after death he goes to hell.[6]

[1] Angut. iii. 31. [2] *Ib.* ii. 4, etc.
[3] Maha Vagga, viii. 22; *Sacred Books.* [4] S. N. i. 6. [5] *Ib.* i. 7.
[6] Angut. iv. 4. Cf. *ib.* ii. 12. 7. See Sigalováda Sutta, translated in Rhys Davids' *Buddhism*, p. 144.

Akin to filial piety is *reverence for age.* This duty is frequently impressed upon members of the Community, and constantly provided for in the Vinaya rules. The hatred of 'old age,'[1] as a form of misery always coupled with death, did not prevent the early Buddhists from being faithful to the Brahman tradition of respect for the old, any more than the theory that birth is also misery was held to justify ingratitude to parents. 'He who always greets and constantly reveres the aged, four things will increase to him, viz., life, beauty, happiness, power.'[2]

'Do they reverence the old?' was one of the questions asked by Gotama about the Vajjians; if they did, they might be expected to prosper.[3]

We now come to what corresponds in the Buddhist system to what we understand by liberality, generosity, and self-sacrifice. I am afraid it cannot be said that either of those terms has an equivalent in Pali. The second certainly has none; and the idea is foreign, as far as I can judge, to Buddhist thought. Liberality and self-sacrifice are the nobler and rarer aspects of what, in their commoner aspects, must be rendered 'giving' and 'giving up' (dánaṁ and cágo). I will discuss these terms as impartially as possible; and with ample illustration, though I confine myself entirely to the Pitakas.

Giving is seldom spoken of simply, apart from

[1] The word 'jará,' the decay of strength, etc., though generally rendered 'old age,' is quite distinct from the words for old age in its honourable sense.

[2] Dh. 109, *Sacred Books of the East*, xxx. 1. 33.

[3] Parinibb. S.

mention of the recipient.[1] As a rule, when used simply, the term means 'giving to monks.' Indeed, I have not noticed any exception to this rule. Nor is there much, if anything, about giving to the poor as such. We do indeed read occasionally of great distributions by kings and rich men, but they are almost always to religious mendicants. It is possible that the idea of a class of needy poor was not familiar to the India of the writer's time. But in the immense majority of instances, the idea of 'giving' is qualified by the character of the recipient. To give to the 'wise' is so much better and more profitable, that all other idea of 'giving' is utterly overshadowed by this. It is no doubt a deep-seated Indian notion that a gift is from the inferior to the superior. The higher the recipient then the more precious and meritorious the gift. That to a Buddha is greatest, then (in later books) that to a self-Buddha, then that to a disciple, in the order of attainments. The smallest gift or service done to one of these exalted beings may lead to an immense reward.[2]

Vacchagotta asked the Buddha whether it was true that he taught that gifts ought to be given to himself alone and not to others. The Buddha repudiated such a charge, and said it was very wrong

[1] Maha Vagga, vi. 23.

[2] One thinks of 'the cup of cold water' and the 'prophet's reward' in the New Testament. But while I will not deny that the Buddhist idea contains part of the truth taught by our Lord, yet I must point out that the essence of the Christian's gift to Christ's disciple consists, not in the attainment of the disciple, but in the reference to Him, who is the true object of all service, the Creator and Owner and Giver of all. The Buddhist principle goes in the right direction, but stops short, and utterly misses the end which gives reason to it.

to prevent a gift being given to others. 'Is it likely that I,' he said, 'who teach consideration for the smallest worm, should have no consideration for men? But I do teach, Vacchagotta, that what is given to the good has great reward, and not what is given to the bad.'[1]

Again: 'There are two kinds of persons to whom gifts should be given in this world, the learner in religion and the advanced saint:

'The learner and the saint in this world
Are worthy of offerings from those who bring gifts:
They are upright in deed, word, and thought;
That is the field for those who bring gifts,
Then what is given has great reward.'[2]

The fourth Sutta of the third book of Sutta Nipata[3] is occupied with answering the question put by a Brahman: 'I delight in offering, O Gotama, I desire to make an offering, but I do not understand it; do thou instruct me, tell me in what case the offering succeeds.' The answer is prolonged through some twenty stanzas, but comes, in short, to this: 'The good,' that is, the Buddha and his followers, 'these deserve the offering. Them you should worship and honour with food and drink, so the gifts will prosper.' In the next Sutta the same instruction is given to a Buddhist householder, and he is told also in what temper of mind he is to be himself while he gives—calm, purged from hatred, and full of loving-kindness.[4]

[1] Angut. iii. 57, paraphrased.
[2] *Ib.* ii. 13. 1.
[3] *Sacred Books of the East*, x. ii. p. 76, etc.
[4] *Ib.* p. 80, etc.

It follows of course from this theory, as it was necessary for practical maintenance, that the Community is the great 'field' for 'giving.' Gifts are the seed, whose crop is 'merit,' and the best 'merit field' is the Sangha. And it is in this character that the Sangha is oftenest commended, less as a teaching body than as a receiving body, to the reverence and confidence of the householder. All other 'giving' is lost sight of in comparison with this, and the word comes almost exclusively to mean giving to individual monks or to the Community. It is the essential part of the layman's duty, the necessary correlative of the mendicant's rule. Its commonest form is the offering of food, the special function of women.

The Buddha was once visiting a faithful woman who provided him with every kind of food, offering it with her own hands. After the meal he said to her: 'A good religious woman who gives food, gives four things to the recipients.' 'What four?' 'She gives vital force, she gives beauty, she gives happiness, she gives strength. By giving vital force, she becomes partaker of vital force, human or divine; by giving beauty, she becomes partaker of beauty; by giving happiness, of happiness; by giving strength, of strength, human or divine.' Then follow the verses:

'The woman who gives well-made food, clean, nice, and full of flavour,
That gift given to the upright, the virtuous, and exalted,
Accumulates merit upon merit; and has great reward, is praised by him who saw all the worlds.
Thinking then of such an offering, let those in the world who are wise
Purge out entirely the mud of stinginess: so they will be unblamed, and go to heaven. (Angut. iv. 57.)

Of Suttas to this effect there is a large collection. The group ends with one which insists on the blessedness of those householders who give to monks the 'four requisites:' robes, food, lodging, and medicines.

> 'By day and by night, for ever their merit increases :
> And heaven is the place he goes to, having wrought a favourable "karma."'

There is no hint that in this matter 'virtue is its own reward,' still less that such conduct pleases a Divine Ruler, or is like a Father in heaven. The inevitable mechanical result of giving to monks is merit and future prosperity. It is entirely for one's own good that one gives. The first offering made to Gotama himself, that of the two merchants, was made, it is expressly said, for their own good.[1] And it is chiefly as giving them the best opportunity for acquiring this merit that the Community is valued by the laity. The laity are injured when good monks leave a place and bad ones succeed them, because 'the opportunities of alms-giving are spoilt.'[2]

So far, we do Buddhism no injustice when we say that the idea of 'giving' falls very short of that which is represented by the word charity, even in its modern degraded use. The giver sows with a view to a crop, which is to be his own; and the course of his liberality is strictly determined by the calculation of the return in merit to be expected. There is in this a portion of the truth, for 'whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap;' but it is only a

[1] Maha Vagga, i. 4. 4.

[2] Culla Vagga, i. 13. 4.

fraction of the truth which was taught by Him who said, 'Your Father shall reward you,' and 'that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven.' In the absence of any knowledge of a Father in heaven, to be imitated and to reward, it was hardly possible that the Christian ideal should be conceived.

There is a nobler aspect of 'giving' or *dánam*,[1] when it is used in composition with *dhamma* or doctrine. The phrase occurs in Asoka's inscriptions, and is one of the technical Buddhist terms that are found there. Commentators doubted, while the Pitaka books were imperfectly known, whether this compound, 'doctrine-gift,' ought to be understood of a 'gift according to the doctrine,' or of a 'gift consisting of the doctrine.' It is clear that the latter is the meaning. The phrase occurs in the following amongst other passages :—

'There are two kinds of gifts : the gift of food and the gift of doctrine ; and of these two, the gift of doctrine is the better.'[2]

The substance of this principle is expressed, though the phrase 'dhammadánam' is not used, in the following :—

'Three persons are great benefactors of another person.

'What three ?'

[1] I avoid as far as possible inflicting Pali words upon the reader ; but of this one word dánam I wish him to take note, with a view to what follows. The word means either 'the act of giving' or 'a gift.'

[2] Angut. ii. 13. 1, a little abridged.

'The person through whom another has gone for refuge to the Buddha, the Law, and the Community.

'The person through whom another obtains knowledge of the Four Truths.

'The person through whom another attains final insight and emancipation.

'There is no benefactor greater than these; and it is no easy thing for that man to requite these benefactors, not by all the respect and homage or all the gifts and service he can offer.'

In another passage, this spiritual benefit is beautifully indicated as the best return a son can make to his parents.[1]

This is the only 'gift' that the monk can give. Silver and gold he has not (or ought not to have); his dánam is dhammadánam. And one who has fulfilled this part is called a liberal monk, and his merit is greater than that of the monk who has only known and attained. For he is to the latter what the Sambuddha is to the pacceka buddha. In the Sumana Sutta[2] a princess asks Gotama what difference there is, supposing each to be re-born in the god-world, between the condition of a monk who has been a 'giver' (dáyako) and that of one who has kept his attainments to himself (adáyako). The answer is, the former enjoys greater long-life, strength, and wisdom. 'And what if each be re-born as a man and become a monk?' 'He will obtain the four requisites (see above, p. 177) with ease or in abundance.'

[1] Angut. ii. 4. 2.

[2] In the latter part of the Angut. Nik.

'And what if both be "rahats"?' 'There is then no difference: Nirvana-bliss is but one' and unqualified.

Such are the main features of the treatment of 'giving.' It is from a rather different point of view that the idea of 'giving up' (cágo) is developed. In this, the ruling thought is not the recipient, but the act of surrender. It is a nearer approach to an entirely unselfish act. In Angut. iii. 70. 8, the disciple is taught to think to what bliss those who are now deities in the various heavens have attained by their faith, their conduct, their *giving up*, and their knowledge, and to say, if I imitate them in these, I shall be born there too.

But in this passage, perhaps, as certainly in many others, it is the 'giving up' of vices that is referred to.

It is often identified with dánam, as in the titles of the most famous illustrations of it by (pretended) acts, in former lives, of him who was to be Buddha. The Cariya Pitaka relates how the Bodhisat (ch. ix.) fulfilled the 'perfection of giving' (dánapáramita) by giving his wife and children, when he was King Vessantara, to Sakra, disguised as a Brahman; by giving up his two eyes to a blind Brahman in the Sivi birth; and, most famous of all, by leaping, when he was a hare, into the fire to be roasted for the dinner of another. This story—doubtless the adaptation of some older folk-lore, founded on the fancied likeness of the shadows in the moon to a hare—has made the sign of the hare in the moon the commonest emblem of the Buddha.

In each of these tales the compiler (one of the latest compilers, I think, within the canon) represents the act as the issue, not of any sense of pity, or enthusiasm of self-sacrifice, but of the coldest calculations of results. 'If I do not make this surrender I shall not attain Buddhahood.'

There is a nobility still about this, but it is the nobility of a strong desire to attain Buddhahood and readiness to pay a high price for knowledge, not at all the nobleness of unselfish self-sacrifice. The original idea is in this instance degraded by the insensibility of the versifier. It must have been on the lips of very different preachers that these parts of Buddhist teaching—Mettam, dánam, cágo—won the hearts of men. But no mere teaching on such topics is worth much—whether it be in Buddhist books or in Christian—unless it is embodied in real human deeds.

CHAPTER XII

THE PRECEPTS

IN the popular conception of Buddhism by Buddhists now, the most prominent place is occupied, not by the Four noble Truths, or the Twelve Nidanas, or the Eight-fold Way, but by the five precepts of conduct: the five rules; in Sinhalese 'pansil.' These are the prohibitions of (1) destroying life, (2) taking what is not given, (3) lying, (4) drinking intoxicating liquors, (5) sexual offences. But it is an interesting fact that these do not hold such a place in the original system. They are not found, as five, in the most ancient manual of discipline. They are not among the discoveries made on the night of Buddhahood, nor are they mentioned in the first sermons. They do not occur in those earliest chapters of the Maha Vagga, which we regard as containing in a nut-shell the authentic kernel of Buddhism. They never occur in any discourse which bears marks of being more than conventionally an utterance of the Buddha himself.

In the Vinaya Pitaka they are found among other rules for the monks—among the ten,—but never stand

by themselves, with one exception. In the fable of the elephant, the monkey, and the partridge, which is introduced into the later part of the Vinaya, it is said that the partridge and his friends lived happily keeping the five precepts.[1]

Nor is the number five constantly adhered to, for in many cases, perhaps in a majority, the fourth prohibition is omitted.

All five are found in a statement of the duties of laymen,[2] and in reference to the conduct of man and wife.[3] They are quoted roughly in a passage which teaches that what really defiles a man is not ceremonial impurity but sin,[4] and in the same book elaborately, but with other rules.[5] In the more exhaustive Suttas, such as the Tevijja Sutta,[6] they are stated under the heading (of more modern date) 'Little Rules of Conduct;' but even in these the fourth rule is sometimes omitted.[7]

From the position which they hold in the books—one of a definiteness gradually increasing from the earliest passages to the later—and also from their nature, we may confidently infer that the five precepts did not, as such, form part of Gotama's original proclamation. We may reasonably doubt whether they had assumed, even by Asoka's time, anything like the prominence which they have since acquired;

[1] Culla Vagga, vi. 6. 3.
[2] Angut. iv. 53. [3] *Ib.* [4] Sutta N. ii. 2.
[5] Sutta N. ii. 14. See Dh. 18; Angut. iv. 99.
[6] *Sacred Books of the East*, xi. p. 190. Cf. Maj. Nik. 41, *et passim*.
[7] *E.g.* in Brahmaj. Sutta.

for it is hard to believe that in that case they would have found no place in his edicts.

Their history is probably this. They were originally formulated, with the other five of the group called the ten precepts, for the guidance of the monks. As lay disciples increased around the Community, these were selected from among the rules to be enforced upon the laity. The laity were not, it must be remembered, originally under rule at all. They were—in the language of modern religious communities—('associated') with them to a certain degree only. Sometimes, or for a limited time, the associated laity might take on themselves eight of the rules, or even the ten; but only the five were ordinarily laid upon them. These five are specified, from among the ten, as those for the breach of which a novice was to be expelled.[1] And even of the five one at least—being no doubt originally intended rather as a ceremonial than as a moral rule—occupied an uncertain position.

However this may be, the Precepts represent quite a different treatment of the theory of morals from that represented by the Truths and the Eight-fold Way, or by the course of four stages in which the disciple gets rid successively of the ten attachments. This is on a lower level altogether; has a humbler aim. It is a popular system adapted not to the early enthusiasm, but to later days.

§ 1. The first precept, against destroying life, has both a ceremonial and a moral side. I have already

[1] Maha Vagga, i. 60 compared with i. 56.

spoken of its moral side; that in which it would be chiefly urged upon the laity. In its ceremonial aspect it is often exaggerated. The use of a filter, lest small creatures should be destroyed in drinking; the injunction to be careful in throwing away a liquid, that it should be thrown either into water which had no worms in it or on to ground where there was no grass; the condemnation (in a late book) of the killing of a dangerous snake;[1] these are exceptions to the common sense which guided most of the early Buddhist regulations. But this exaggeration does not seem ever to have been carried to such lengths as by the Jains.

The monk eats meat; Gotama himself habitually did so, and died, as we know, from the consequence of a meal of pork. And the offering of that flesh is commended as one of the two most meritorious offerings ever made. The monk may not encourage an animal's being killed on purpose for him; but seeing that he is invited to a meal on the morrow, and on his accepting the invitation the host goes away to prepare the feast—nothing occurs oftener than this, and it was the case with Cunda's pork—there is no real scrupulousness about the killing of animals for food.

There are indications of a Brahmanical aspect of this precept, in which it is applied particularly to killing cows and oxen,[2] and of an anti-Brahman aspect of it in which it is a direct attack on Brahman

[1] Udán, 13.

[2] A horrible torture is assigned to the murderer of an ox, Sanyut. xix. 2.

sacrifice. This is a very common moral in the 'birth-stories,' but it occurs also in the Pitaka books.[1] Among the evils involved in Brahman sacrifices, besides the slaughter of animals, the destruction of grass and wood for fuel is condemned.

But the most interesting fact connected with the ancient insistance on this rule is the virtual promulgation of it by Asoka in his earlier edicts. In the earliest group he says that he not only has withdrawn his patronage from sacrifices, but has reduced to a minimum the supplies for the royal table. At a later date he had given up eating meat altogether.

But the fact that Asoka, while so strongly insisting on the avoidance of taking life, does not use the special term under which it is forbidden in the precept, is a strong argument that the five precepts did not hold, in his day, any such position as they do in later Buddhism.

The public announcement of this maxim by royal authority, as a counsel if not as a law, for a vast continent, is surely one of the most curious events in the history of the human conscience. It cannot be too clearly or too confidently stated, that the Buddhist conscience was misinformed. Taking the life of animals for suitable purposes is not wrong. The judgment of the best men in the wisest races of mankind accords with the teaching of Revelation upon

1 Sutta N. ii. 7; Sanyut. xv. 13; Angut. iv. 39; Kútadanta S. (D.N. vi.). This Sutta is apparently an enlarged anti-Brahman Játaka. The use in it of Samárabhataro is to be compared with the use of Árambhati in the edicts.

this point. The conscience of Gotama, Asoka, and the Buddhist world was at fault; and this erroneous piece of moral law has been promulgated with such a publicity and earnestness, and imperial authority, as probably has never been placed at the service of any other single moral rule. The very characters in which it was recommended are marked at this day upon the face of India.

§ 2. The prohibition of stealing, or taking what has not been given, is not much enlarged upon. In the later books, as might be expected, it is exaggerated; as where one is condemned for smelling a flower, as having taken a scent which did not belong to him. Of the elaborate enumeration of all imaginable instances of this and other offences, which is found in the Vinaya Pitaka, I propose to treat later.

§ 3. Prohibition of false speaking. This is often qualified by the words, 'conscious and deliberate.' Deliberate lying is frequently and strongly condemned. And many illustrations are given of the evil of it. The rules against sins of speech occupy as large a space as all the other four rules together. He who lies is guilty of all sin.[1] It is mentioned as chief among the evils to which men are led by gain, honour, and fame.[2] The liar goes to hell.[3] A hint is given of the late date at which part even of the Vinaya was compiled, when, it is said, of some of the monks of Gotama's day, 'Now, at that time men were speakers of truth,

[1] Maj. Nik. 61.
[2] Sanyut. xvii. 11.
[3] Dh. 22, etc. etc.

and keepers of their word which they had pledged.'[1] But the most remarkable thing about this rule is the way in which it is expanded. Under this head every kind of unkind speaking, whether as abuse or violent language before a man's face, or as slander behind his back, is condemned. The passages are many, and some of them are excellent.[2] Not only is what is bad to be avoided, but such language as will give pleasure and promote unity is to be cultivated.

The pupil of a monk is to warn his tutor if he sees him on the verge of offending with his tongue.[3] A man should speak well of his neighbour even if unasked.[4] Some slanders, however, are worse than others. Speaking against a Buddha is a terrible sin, and we read of the awful consequence of a slander against the two chief disciples, Sáriputta and Mogallána.[5]

Further, under the same head, chattering and talking nonsense are forbidden. Probably this has in view the dignity of members of the Community, and their keeping distinct, which is much insisted on, from those outside. Too much fondness for talking to householders is often condemned. This tends to confirm what I have suggested, that these were originally rules of conduct for the Community.

However that may be, the fact remains, and it is one to be reckoned to the credit of Buddhism, that

[1] Culla Vagga, vii. 1. 3; *Sacred Books of the East*, xx. p. 226.
[2] Tevijja S., and Digh. Nik. *pass.*
[3] Maha Vagga, i. 25. 10.
[4] Angut. iv. 73. See *ibid.* 100.
[5] S. N. ii. 10. See *ibid.* xxx. pp. 73, 119; and iv. 14, p. 177.

the moral teaching as to the use of speech is practical, full, and high-toned.

§ 4. The fourth precept, which forbids impurity, is generally briefly stated, and so left. I should prefer so to leave it now; but if at all a true estimate of the Buddhist teaching is to be formed, two points in regard to this subject must be noted. First, offences against this rule, though classed among the gravest possible offences, are usually treated as breaches of a ceremonial rule, not as sins; and accordingly that which in itself is really no sin at all,—for instance, the return of a monk to his own wife,—ranks with the grossest sins. Secondly, the rule is qualified, where it occurs in that code which most scholars consider the very oldest part of the Buddhist literature, by the addition of words, which it is impossible to quote, but which show a depravity of the moral standard, a misconception of the moral proportion of things, which is perfectly appalling.

§ 5. In comparison with the real importance of the second, third, and fourth, and the immense fictitious importance of the first rule of conduct, the emphasis laid on the fifth, which forbids strong drink, is trifling.[1] As I have already mentioned, it is frequently absent from the list, even in the most exhaustive and systematic Suttas. It is conspicuously absent from a list of the things which certainly bring a man to hell.[2] It is condemned in a monk, whose bright light it

[1] Tevijja S., Brahmaj. S., Samañ. S.; but see Kutadant S. 25.
[2] Angut. iv. 64; and see *ibid.* 261 *seq.*

obscures,[1] and to refrain from it is excellent for any one.[2]

'Let the householder who approves of (adopts) this dharma not give himself to intoxicating drinks; let him not cause others to drink, nor approve of those that drink, knowing it is madness.

'For through intoxication the stupid commit sins, and make other people intoxicated: let him avoid this seat of sin, this madness, this folly, delightful to the stupid.'[3]

This is the strongest passage on this subject that I have noticed. I have met with no instance of any history of the evil consequences of it: no births in hell of drunkards, etc.

When it is mentioned (in its place in the list) it is usually associated in terms of equal importance with warnings against frequenting theatres and dancing and music halls, as one of the forms of idleness, rather than as a degrading habit, or as leading to mischief. One can only wonder how a rule so little insisted on, and so little observed by the laity, except in fulfilment of special vows, can have maintained its place in the Fivefold Code.

1 Culla Vagga, xii. 1. 3; S. N. iv. 5. 15. 16; Angut. iv. 50.
2 S. N. ii. 4 (Mangala S.)
3 Dhammika S. 22; trans. in *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xii. 66.

CHAPTER XIII

SPECIAL MORAL RULES OF THE COMMUNITY: THE PATIMOKKHA

§ 1. THE estimation in which these rules of conduct were originally held, and their relative importance, may be further judged of by the place which they occupy in the special laws of the Community. At the beginning of the Pátimokkha (or method for the monks to clear themselves of guilt by confession) are laid down four irremediable faults, or 'conditions of defeat,' considered to be fatal to the *status* of a regular disciple of the Buddha. These faults are breaches of peculiar forms of four of the five rules of conduct. The first is any act of sexual intercourse.[1] The second is thus worded: 'Whatsoever Bhikkhu shall take from village, etc., or from wood, anything not given—what men call "theft,"—in such manner of taking as kings would seize the thief for, and slay, or bind, or banish him, saying, "Thou art a thief, thou art stupid, thou art a fool, thou art dishonest;" the Bikkhu who in that manner takes the

[1] It is here that the words occur, 'antamaso,' etc., to which I have referred as revealing so shocking a depravation of the moral sense.

thing not given, he, too, has fallen into defeat, he is no longer in communion.'[1]

The third treats human life as more serious than others.

It runs, 'Whatsoever Bhikkhu shall knowingly deprive of life a human being, or shall seek out an assassin against a human being, or shall utter the praises of death, or incite another to self-destruction, saying, "Ho! my friend! what good do you get from this sinful, wretched, life? death is better to thee than life!" If so thinking, and with such an aim, he by various argument utter the praises of death, or incite another to self-destruction, he too is fallen into defeat, he is no longer in communion.'[2]

The fourth offence does, I believe, correspond to lying (musávàda), but is a special form of it which was regarded, I suppose, as specially destructive of spiritual progress to the individual, and injurious to the Community. 'Whatsoever Bhikkhu, without being clearly conscious of extraordinary qualities, shall give out regarding himself that insight into the knowledge of the noble ones has been accomplished, saying, "Thus do I know, thus do I perceive," and at some subsequent time, whether on being pressed, or without being pressed, he, feeling guilty, shall be desirous of being cleansed from his fault, and shall say, "Brethren, when I knew not, I said that I knew; when I saw not, I said that I saw, telling a fruitless falsehood; then, unless he so spake through undue

[1] *Sacred Books of the East*, xiii. 4. [2] *Ib.* xiii. 4.

confidence, he too has fallen into defeat, he is no longer in communion.'[1]

These four great crimes are repeated (Maha Vagga, v. 78) in the formula of warning addressed to monks at their first admission.

§ 2. These are the foundation of the remaining moral laws of the Community, which follow in the other sections of the Patimokkha. Next in order to the four great offences, follow the thirteen called (from the nature of the formalities required to atone for them) 'Sanghádisesa.' Of these the first five are connected with uncleanness; the next two belong, I think, though in a curious way, to the offence of 'taking life.' They insist on the importance, in the erection of huts for the monk's use, of care to avoid 'danger,' that is, to animals, etc. etc., leaving a clear space round the building, that animals may not be inconvenienced or unintentionally killed. The remaining six are against faults which come under the head of 'falsehood,' such as deliberate lying, slander, obstinate false teaching, causing division, and so on.

The two rules called 'Aniyata' deal with faults connected with the first 'Condition of Defeat.' The next group, 'Nissaggiya Pacittiya,' deal with the special observances of the Community, the use of robes, bowls, rags, etc., restrict the monks to certain medicines, and forbid the use or possession of gold and silver. The-ninety-two 'Pacittiya' rules contain a larger proportion of moral laws. The topics are

[1] *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xiii. 4.

mixed together in the utmost confusion; but in prominent places, for instance, at the beginning or end of a group of rules, come those against faults connected with the four great offences. Out of the ninety-two Pacittiya rules, about five are directed against taking life, and some of these are curious. Digging, for instance, lest worms should be killed, is entirely forbidden to the monk; although agriculture is popularly held to be one of the harmless livelihoods, as not involving the taking of life. In connection with theft there is only one rule, against picking up and keeping a jewel which may have been dropped. Something like twenty rules are intended to guard against occasions of sexual offence. About ten are directed against lying, slander, and the like, or against pretensions to supernatural powers. There is only one that forbids spirituous liquors, and it is followed by several against indecorum; a connection which probably confirms my view that it was on general grounds of indecorum and levity that these drinks were originally forbidden. The rest of the ninety-two Pacittiya rules are directed against breaches of the special rules of the Community, especially in regard to food. There are several against witnessing military parades and the like; probably because war is a form of taking life.

The next group need not detain us. The last section of the Patimokkha consists of the rules of outward deportment, to which we shall hereafter return. In this place I need only notice that these

rules of deportment do not touch upon the general rules of conduct, except in one or two regulations, such as not to spit upon growing grass, which show minute consideration for living things.

In all this the reader will have observed that three classes of offences, the sexual, that of taking life, and that of falsehood, slander, and division, stand out in far the greatest prominence: that it is not thought necessary to dwell so much on theft, and that the prohibition of theft is not extended so as to forbid other forms of dishonesty; and that no emphasis is laid on abstinence from alcohol;[1] this last being treated as only one of the ceremonial restrictions, and not among the most important of these. A more prominent place, however, is given to it in the (not very ancient) discourse about the Four Stains (Culla Vagga, xii. 1. 3) where it is classed with sensuality, owning gold and silver, and low ways of livelihood.

With this view of the comparative gravity of offences the whole tenor of the books corresponds.

§ 3. The comparatively brief enumeration of offences which has here been sketched forms the Patimokkha, a manual for the use of the monks at their fortnightly meeting. This manual does not occur as such in the canonical books, but every sentence of it is to be found there, accompanied by a vast quantity of explanatory matter. The four Parajika Rules, as they stand in the Patimokkha, occupy not twenty lines altogether; but the four books called Parajika, at the beginning of the

[1] Alcohol as a medicine, Maha Vagga, vi. 14. 1.

Vinaya Pitaka, occupy one hundred and nine pages octavo. The thirteen Sanghadisesa Rules can be printed in a page; the thirteen books so called in the Vinaya fill seventy-seven pages. In short, the Patimokkha as a manual would perhaps occupy fifteen pages; while the Sutta Vibhanga, which represents it in the list of canonical books, occupies two hundred and sixty-six. The explanation given by the Sinhalese is that the larger book is the utterance of the Buddha, and the smaller a practical compendium extracted from it. European scholars, on the other hand, believe—and, no doubt, rightly—that the manual is the original, and the larger work an ancient amplification of it. The strongest argument for this lies in the nature of one part of the matter with which, in the Sutta Vibhanga, the Patimokkha is surrounded, viz., a word-for-word glossary or commentary on each sentence as it occurs. The sentences themselves were certainly prior to this glossary and comment (called by Professors Oldenberg and Rhys Davids, 'the Old Commentary'); and in all probability both sentences and glossary were far older than the rest of the amplification which forms the Sutta Vibhanga. Still, since the Sutta Vibhanga is a book of the canon, supposed by Buddhists to be the Buddha's very words, and as far as can be known, part of the canon from the earliest days of its compilation, we cannot leave it out of reckoning, and discuss the morality of the Buddhist 'sacred books' as if they contained only the Patimokkha.

The contents, then, of this first book of the Vinaya are as follows: First, in each case there is a history of the circumstances under which the Buddha propounded the rule. Then comes the rule, and then the verbal glossary and commentary. Then follow an immense number of illustrations, cases in which, as it is stated, doubt arose whether a monk was guilty or not. Every possible variety of theft is said to have been committed by monks, and the Buddha to have been asked in every case whether he was guilty, and in what degree, and to have replied, he is guilty of a grave fault, or of a serious fault, or not guilty, etc., as the case might be.

It is worth while, even at the expense of some tediousness, to give the reader an idea of the way in which moral principles are dealt with. I will take, therefore, a few samples out of the twenty-seven closely printed pages, which contain, with many abbreviations, the chapter on theft.

First a very long story—over four octavo pages—is told about a monk named Dhaniyo. The other monks at the end of the three months of '*was*' or 'retirement' broke up the grass huts in which they had lived, and carried away the grass and sticks. Dhaniyo did not leave at the end of the wet season, but still, while he was on his rounds, the other monks, broke up his hut and carried away the grass and sticks. This occurred three times. Now, Dhaniyo was a potter's son, and so he made himself a very nice little hut of clay; but this, because it implied

some danger to animal life, the Buddha condemned, and ordered it to be destroyed. Dhaniyo next had recourse to the forester and begged some wood of him, and the forester gave him some cart-loads of the king's deodar timber. The prime minister inquired for the timber and was surprised to learn from the forester that the king had given it to Dhaniyo. He found on inquiry that this was not true, and the forester was brought bound before the king. But as he was being dragged along, Dhaniyo saw him, learnt the cause, and went with him to the king. The king treated the monk with great respect, and asked him whether it was true that he (the king) had given him the timber. He prevaricated about it, and was dismissed by the king with a severe rebuke. People were scandalised at this misconduct and untruth in one of the monks who made such high professions, and the matter was brought to the Buddha. The Community was called together, and Dhaniyo was publicly rebuked for taking timber when it had not been given. The Buddha then asked a monk who had formerly been a nobleman what was the *minimum* value of theft for which the king would execute, imprison, or banish a thief; and on learning that the amount was so and so (a 'páda') he promulgated the rule:—

'Whatever monk, with intent to steal, takes anything ungiven, being such as that kings, catching a thief taking it, would execute, imprison, or banish him, as a robber, a fool, a madman, or a thief—

that monk so taking ungiven is "defeated" and expelled.'

Then follows a story—nearly a page—of how some bad monks robbed the king's stores of a quantity of material for robes, and disregarded the Buddha's rule, on the pretext that it applied to a forest only and not to a town. This led to the promulgation of the rule in a new form, with the words, 'Whether in forest or town.'

Next come seven pages of definitions of the terms used in this rule, and in a curious gloss upon it, of which the following may serve as specimens:—

'Punish' means 'punish with hand, or foot, or rod, or stick, or half-rod, or by cutting;' 'bind' means 'bind with ropes, chains, fetters, or in house-prison, or city prison, or village prison, or town prison, or putting under restraint.' 'Banish' means 'banish from village, or town, or city, or district, or province.' 'In the earth' means 'goods placed in the earth, dug in, or covered.' If a monk looks a second time with thievish mind at goods placed in the earth, or looks for a spade or a basket, or goes near, he is guilty of a fault. If he breaks the sticks or creepers at the place, he is guilty of a fault. If he moves the earth, or lifts it, or takes it away, he is guilty of a fault. If he handles the pot, it is a fault; if he shakes it, of a great offence; if he moves it, of an unpardonable offence.

In the same sentence follow about twenty more possible cases, each with its gravity assigned. Of sentences like this, each with from ten to twenty

possible cases, there follow between twenty and thirty.

Then comes a section to this effect. A monk tells another monk to take away such and such an article. It is a fault. That monk, meaning to take it, takes it. Both are guilty of an unpardonable offence. A monk tells another to take away such and such an article; he, meaning to take it, takes away something else; the mistaken one is not guilty; the one who would take away is guilty of an unpardonable offence. A monk tells another to take something; he, meaning to take another thing, takes it. Both are guilty of an unpardonable offence. About seventeen more cases follow.

About fifty cases are then briefly enumerated. This ends the first 'section' on Theft.

The next section consists of about one hundred and fifty cases of the following form: 'At that time some mango-stealers dropped a mango and ran away. The monks, thinking, "Make haste, before the owners see us," with thievish mind, ate it. The owners blamed them as no true monks. They felt remorse, and went and confessed it to the Buddha, who decided that they had been guilty of an unpardonable sin.' The same with a jambu fruit (told in full). The same with a tamarind, and so on. One knows not whether to be more annoyed at the silly accumulation of cases, or at the utterly technical and uninstructive character of the decisions.

The explanation, which is given even now by Bud-

dhist authorities of this tedious accumulation, is that it was necessary to mention every form of theft, lest any form, not being specially forbidden, should be thought lawful. Such a notion was no doubt in the minds of those who were capable of covering leaf after leaf with these pretended instances. But it is not the notion of any one to whom moral principles are a living reality. It betrays a marvellous deadness of the moral sense—an utter ignorance of what constitutes the meaning and value of moral action or restraint. It is the work of men to whom conduct had become a matter, not of principle or motive or character, but of mechanical conformity to rule. Convinced as I am that these 'instances' were drawn up, not, indeed, after the Pitakas, for they are often alluded to in Pitaka books, and the knowledge of them commended, but long after the death of Gotama and his early disciples, I see in them a proof how the moral sense was benumbed by Buddhist views of life and by the manner in which the monks even then lived.

Let those who talk of comparing the Buddhist morality with the Christian, compare this method of illustrating a commandment with that by which Our Lord Jesus Christ, in the Sermon on the Mount, let in, by a word, a flash of light on the inner meaning and life of each precept as He touched it; or with the way in which His Apostle showed up the root and value of outward morality, when he said, 'Lie not one to another, brethren, for ye are members one of another.' The two moralities have no more in

common than a list of bones on paper has with a living body.

A worse thing has to be said. This method of innumerable illustrations, by pretended cases in which monks so acted, of every way in which a command can be broken, is applied to sexual offences with still greater fulness. The pages devoted in the Parajika book to the other three great faults together are about seventy, those devoted to offences against purity are forty. In the Sanghadisesa the proportion is even larger. It is impossible to do more than glance at the pages as one turns them over in disgust, but it is right to say deliberately that they go far beyond specifying all possible forms of licentiousness, to expatiate in regions of impossible and unimaginable obscenity.

I do not wish to put on this a worse construction than is absolutely necessary, but the least that can be said is this : the deadness of moral feeling, which can allow the moralist to compile such lists on *any* topic, is immensely more signal when he applies the method to this.

CHAPTER XIV

RELIGION OF THE LAITY

SO far I have treated chiefly of the fundamental principles of morals—being parts of morality which are applicable to all, claiming to represent the eternal distinction between right and wrong,—and the special Rules of Monastic Conduct. Though I have regarded the Five Rules of Conduct as intended to be of universal application, I have been obliged to treat of them, as they were doubtless first promulgated in Buddhism, in the form specially applicable to the Community. We have now to look at these principles of conduct in the form in which they concern the 'laity.' For it has always to be borne in mind that the discipline of Buddhism, properly speaking, belongs primarily to the Community, and only in a secondary way to the laity, as 'outsiders' associated with the Community more or less closely. The teaching of the Buddha was for all living creatures in the 'three worlds,'—for deities of every order, for men, and even for brutes; but his discipline was primarily for the members, male and female, of the Community, and secondarily for the laity

associated with them. For the layman, therefore, one at least of the Five Rules of Conduct takes a different form. He is not called to celibacy, but is required to be faithful to his wife.[1] Others of the Five Rules are less stringently bound upon him. He cannot be expected entirely to avoid taking life,[2] and it is never imputed as blame to him if he kills animals for the table. He incurs, indeed, the demerit of such actions, and their evil consequences in future births; that is his misfortune, and a good reason for abandoning, as an act of prudence, a mode of living which involves killing anything. But he may continue in it without any rebellion against Buddhism. The rule of abstinence from alcohol stands among the five, but no layman is blamed for not keeping it, unless after a special vow; nor have I ever met with any intimation of the breach of this rule being, as such, productive of birth in hells or in other low stages of being.

The layman's life, in its free condition, is full of danger, and almost inevitably involves demerit; but on the other hand, by well-placed gifts, seed well sown in the right field, that is, given to the Community, he can be ensuring a vast crop of merit. He may secure many births in heaven, and few in hells. But the layman is never any nearer to escape from existence, nor even secure of not going down into the three low states, as brute or as goblin, or in hell, until he has entered the course or paths of Buddhist training.

'Two whose mode of life and occupation are quite

[1] Angut. iv. 55. [2] Maha Vagga, vi. 31. 13.

different, are not equal: a householder maintaining a wife, and an unselfish virtuous man. A householder is intent upon the destruction of other living creatures, being unrestrained; but a Muni always protects living creatures, being restrained.

'As the crested bird with the blue neck (the peacock) never attains the swiftness of the swan, even so a householder does not equal a Bhikkhu, a secluded Muni meditating in the wood.'[1]

But there is no reason altogether to exclude the householder from the benefits of religion, as described in such sentences as the following:

'He who has done meritorious acts is happy here, is happy after death, is happy in both worlds; he is happy and delighted when he sees the purity of his own course of action (kamma). . . . . He is glad when he thinks, I have wrought merit; still more glad when he has entered on some happy condition (in the next life).'[2]

The Buddha was asked whether any householder, who had not abandoned the bond of household life, did, after the dissolution of the body, reach the end of sorrow. 'No', he replied. He was then asked: 'Has any such householder gone to a heaven after death?' 'Not one hundred,' he replied, 'nor two hundred, nor three, nor four, nor five hundred, but many more householders than that, without leaving the bonds of household life, have gone to heaven after death.'

[1] S. N. i. 12; *Sacred Books of the East*, x. ii. p. 35, and see *ib.* ii. 6 *ib.* p. 46.

[2] Dh. 18.

The case of the orthodox layman is thus much better than that of a heretical ascetic. For the next question was: 'Has any naked ascetic made an end of sorrow?' 'None.' 'Has any gone to heaven?' In ninety-one cycles I can remember only one naked ascetic gone to heaven; and he held the doctrine of the fruit of actions and the necessity of action.'[1]

In another Sutta, Gotama is said to have revealed that multitudes of his lay followers, of pure and chaste lives, had got rid of the first five attachments, and were sure of entering Nirvana from the other world, without returning here; that multitudes, even of householders, who lived in the enjoyment of worldly goods but were religious and attentive to teaching, were past all doubt and secure of their future.[2]

Although, therefore, it is impossible to go straight from household life into Nirvana, it may be secured in the nearer or further future, and in any case a birth in some heaven may be expected by the good layman.

The regular course of instruction for laymen is as follows. The preacher speaks first of giving, then of conduct (the five precepts, etc.), then of heaven; then he speaks of the evils of pleasures and the profit of retirement from the world. Only after these have been grasped, will he speak of the characteristic teachings of the Buddhas, the Four Truths, and the like. The doctrine of heaven and hell is especially the layman's doctrine.[3]

[1] Maj. Nik. 71. [2] *Ib.* 73. [3] Udán, v. 3 *et pass.*

For a monk, indeed, the desire to be born, for instance, as one of the lower deities is a low motive; it comes of desire; and good conduct produced thereby is imperfect. But for layman and for women it is the recognised incentive. Those monks who attain supernatural vision and can see the re-births of others, see many entering in life on the various heavens 'through good conduct in act, word, and thought.'[1] And the Buddha promised it, according to one passage,[2] to any one who had faith in him. A faithful husband and wife, if they are alike in faith, in conduct, in sacrifice, and in knowledge, may hope to be together in the next world as well as in this.[3]

These are cases of a continued course of religion; but the layman is encouraged also by the prodigious rewards of single acts of merit. For a single offering of food, a person is often born in heaven,[4] and that not once but for a long succession of lives. In fact the heavens are peopled, and even ruled, by deities who earned their place by such offerings.

On the other hand, there are innumerable places of torment, to which those go whose conduct has been bad in act, word, or thought, and who have been guilty of some single atrocious crime, such as that of the slanderer of Sariputta, or of Devadatta when he drew blood from the foot of the Buddha. Such and such a character, or the doer of such and such a deed, is frequently said to be 'as good as cast already into

[1] Maj. Nik. 4 *et pass.*
[2] *Ib.* 22. *ad fin.*
[3] Angut. iv. 55.
[4] Maha Vagga, vi. 24. 5, etc.

hell,' just as the virtuous are 'as good as gone to heaven already.'[1]

The higher attainments and the final goal of Nirvana are thus left out of sight, and a simple religion is provided for simple folk. Theirs is in fact much more of a religion than the philosophical morality of the monks.

The lower state, as the condition of the householder is called, is not much thought of in the very earliest chapters of the Vinaya; the first disciples nearly all became monks and saints. But after King Bimbisara had become a follower of the Buddha, the doctrine became established in the eighty thousand townships under his rule, and the eighty thousand overseers of those townships were converted. They were first attracted, we are told, by a display of miracles. A monk, Sujáta, was ordered to exhibit his power by rising in the air and sitting there, emitting fire and smoke, appearing and disappearing and the like. The account of what followed (which I quote from Professor Rhys Davids' translation) is the type of all such conversions.[2]

'Then the Blessed One perceived by his mind the thoughts of the minds of those eighty thousand overseers over the townships, and held to them a discourse in due order; that is to say, he spake to them of giving, of righteousness, of heaven, of the danger, the worthlessness, the depravity of lusts, and of the

[1] An absurd series of purgatorial tortures is described in Sanyut. xix. 1 *seq.*
[2] Maha Vagga, v. 1. 9; *Sacred Books of the East*, xvii. pp. 4, 5.

advantages of renunciation. And when the Blessed One perceived that they had become pliant, softened, unprejudiced, upraised, and believing in heart, then he proclaimed that which is the special doctrine of the Buddhas, that is to say, suffering, its origin, its cessation, and the path.

'Just as a clean cloth, from which all stain has been washed away, would readily take the dye, just even so did those eighty thousand overseers over the townships obtain, even while sitting there, the pure and spotless eye of the truth, that is to say, the knowledge that whatsoever has a beginning, in that is inherent also the necessity of dissolution.

'And having seen the truth, having mastered the truth, having understood the truth, having penetrated the truth, having overcome uncertainty, having dispelled all doubts, having gained full knowledge, dependent on nobody else for the knowledge of the doctrine of the teacher, they said to the Blessed One: "Glorious Lord! glorious Lord! just as if one should set up, Lord, what had been overturned, or should reveal what had been hidden, or should point out the way to one who had lost his way, or should bring a lamp into the darkness, in order that those who had eyes might see visible things, thus has the Blessed One preached the doctrine in many ways. We take our refuge, Lord, in the Blessed One, and in the Dhamma, and in the fraternity of Bhikkhus. May the Blessed One receive us from this day forth while our life lasts as his disciples who have taken their refuge in him!'

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'And Sona Kolivisa thought, "As I understand the Dhamma proclaimed by the Blessed One, it is not easy to a person living as a layman to lead a wholly perfect and pure and altogether consummate life of holiness. What if I were to cut off my hair and beard, and to put on yellow robes and give up the world, and go forth into the houseless state?"

'And those eighty thousand overseers over the townships, having expressed their joy and delight at the words of the Blessed One, rose from their seats and respectfully saluted the Blessed One, and passing round him with their right sides towards him, went away.'

The following is a specimen of a sermon addressed to such lay disciples later in their course; it is one that we often find repeated :—

Then the Buddha addressed the Pataligama disciples: 'There are these five losses, householders, incurred by him who does not obey the rules of conduct through his misconduct.' 'What five?' 'By neglect he incurs great loss of property, a bad report of him goes about; if he goes into any company whether of warriors, or of Brahmans, or of householders, or of ascetics, he enters it without confidence and in confusion; in the moment of death he is bewildered; and after death and the dissolution of the body he goes to some evil condition or place of torment or hell. These are the five losses which are incurred by the man who does not obey the rules of conduct. Exactly the reverse is the case of the good man, and after death he goes to some happy condition or to heaven.'[1]

[1] Maha Vagga, vi. 28. 4, abridged.

In regard to the regulation of married life, the teaching of the Pitakas is excellent;[1] and the ideal Brahmans or the Brahmans of old, are commended for that they did not buy their wives but married for love.[2] Very strong things are said against women and intercourse with them, but these are meant for monks; and we have seen above how husband and wife are taught to hope to see one another in the world to come.[3]

The Sutta called the Sutta of Happiness or good luck—the Maha Mangala Sutta—is especially intended for the laity. The favourite use of the word which forms its title is in reference to domestic festivals and home happiness. It commends especially, as among the greatest of blessings—'Waiting on father and mother, protecting wife and child . . giving alms, taking care of relatives, ceasing from sin, and from intoxicating drink, reverence and humility, contentment and gratitude, patience and pleasant speech,'—together with opportunities of intercourse with the wise and good, and of hearing the law and religious conversation.[4] It goes on to extol Nirvana, but this picture of a quiet and religious domestic life is the characteristic part of the Sutta. It is constantly repeated now by the monks in Ceylon, and it is a great pity that nobody understands it.

[1] *E.g.* S. N. i. 6.

[2] Angut. iv. 55.

[3] *E.g.* S. N. iv. 7, *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. x. p. 156.

[4] S. N. ii. 4. See the whole in *ib.* p. 44. The next Sutta in importance as regards lay conduct is the Sigalovada Sutta, of which Professor Rhys Davids has given the substance in *Buddhism*, p. 143.

CHAPTER XV

GENERAL ESTIMATE

IN looking back at the moral system which we have sketched, the reader will no doubt be impressed by the vividness with which, from amid the dull enumerations, the merely imaginary stages of attainment, and the irrelevant metaphysical speculations, there stand out certain noble features, exhibiting a high ideal of purity, kindness, and moral earnestness. I do not wish to detract from that impression. I share it, and continued study of the books does not weaken it.

But I should not be putting the whole case before my reader unless I pointed out to him, not only, as I have done, the qualifications which apply to those points in which the Buddhist theory of morality excels, but also those regions of feeling and action in which it is almost entirely defective.

The emotions are as nearly as possible discarded. Their exercise is as far as possible restrained. The temper of kindness is not an exception to this, for it is only an attitude, not an active emotion. Thus

a large part of the sphere of duty is unprovided for. One is in danger of forgetting, in admiring the theory of self-restraint, that the emotions are in fact a region in which human excellence is very greatly exercised and developed; and that a system which sets them aside, as if they tended only to evil, which knows nothing of good desires, righteous anger, holy sorrow, reasonable fear, or just hatred, so far libels human nature, and is doomed to be so far ineffective.

The motive which Buddhist morality recognises, if it can be said to recognise any, is wholly selfish and individual. It is not for the love of truth or goodness, nor for the benefit of others,—to instance the two principal motives recognised by other merely human systems,—it is solely for the individual's own advantage that he is incited to cultivate virtue. Nor is it a very brave or noble selfishness. It seeks, not to make the best of self, like the Greek selfishness, but to escape from pain and from the burdens of life. It is not ennobling.

And the idea of duty is utterly absent. From first to last, the sacred books are terribly consistent in failing to recognise any sort of 'obligation.' An indignant expostulation with some monk whose conduct is unworthy of the principles and the rule which he professes hardly amounts to an assertion that he *owes* anything even to the Community. Much as we read of effort, it is always effort for self, effort to attain independence and quiet; never work for the sake of work, or work for the sake of others, or work

for the sake of duty. This system is unsocial. If it recognises the propriety of mutual kindness, it recognises—except in certain family relationships—no duty of mutual service or action.

For, in fact, it is in the main theoretic and artificial. It invites a man to turn his back on life; on human life as it is. In the contemplation of an endless series of lives, the paramount importance of this present life is overlooked by the theorist, and to some extent is concealed from all who are brought up to believe in that series of lives. To make the most of one's opportunity while one lives; to have done something before one dies—whether for one's self or for others—no such ambition is set before the Buddhist. He has no aim in life except to escape from it.

This defect spoils even the theory itself and the statement of it. They want enthusiasm. They want aspiration. Compared with the dead levels of the lists of vices and of the supernatural attainments, an expression here and there, in some isolated sentence, or some ecstatic outburst of the Buddha himself, or of one of his disciples in the delight of conversion, may have almost the ring of enthusiasm; but on the whole the Buddhist view of human hopes and possibilities is pale and cold. I will not contrast it with Christian hope: it is enough to turn from the Pitakas to a dialogue of Plato. There is much in Buddhist moral theory which may be contrasted favourably with parts of the Greek standard; but when one

turns from the Suttas to an utterance of Socrates, one feels as if one had escaped from some of those gloomy passages, which Plato describes, within the earth, to drive among the chariots of the gods along the open crest of heaven, catching sight, if only for a moment, of the eternal truths and feeling the capacities of immortality.

For with all its proud claims and assertions of attainment, Buddhism does in effect deny the high capacities of man. The Brahman ideal of absorption into the One Supreme Being was nobler and nearer truth. That Buddhism knows nothing of such absorption,[1] if only because it admits no such Supreme Being, is now at last beginning to be understood. The Buddhist theory makes the fatal mistake, of supposing that it is grand to have nothing and no one to look up to. The monk, if he has attained the further stages of his course, can look down, it is pretended, on deities and all that is divine. Sakra, prince of the gods, and the great Brahma himself, are supposed to pay homage to a monk. But this does not exalt the monk; it takes away from him the opportunity of being great. There is no reality about it; if it is a kind of greatness, it is one not compatible with humanity. Buddhism degrades man by denying that there is any being above him.

A similar complaint may justly be made against that which Buddhism does propose as man's final goal and aim, extinction or Nirvana. No language could

[1] See Note at the end of this chapter.

be too strong to express the indignation with which a true sense of human dignity rouses us to protest against this dreary calumny. But although the strict theory is that the goal of the saintly life is the extinction of existence, this plays but a small part among the considerations which the 'sacred books' enforce. To the ordinary layman, the prospect is held out of an indefinite continuance of life in happy places; and to the monk, if such there be, who aims at Nirvana, it is chiefly in this life, in a passionless calm beyond the reach of temptation, doubt, or effort, that he is taught to seek it. Here, as in many other points, the necessity of meeting to some extent the demand for reality has made the Buddhist system better than it logically ought to be.

But in view of such defects as I have been indicating, I cannot, for my part, rank this system, regarded as a theory of human life and action, with the best of those which, apart from Divine revelation, men have formed.

Note on the Erroneous Notion of 'Absorption,' etc.

There is a popular notion that 'union with deity' is set forth in the Buddhist books as an aim or prospect. This is, I believe, a complete mistake. Such a doctrine would obviously be inconsistent with the other principles of Buddhism; and although Buddhism is not absolutely consistent with itself, it was hardly

possible that it, or any system, should find room for so glaring an inconsistency as this would be.

I have seen no passage which gives colour to it.

The notion is chiefly, if not entirely, founded on the language of the Tevijja Sutta (translated in *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xi.) and parallel passages about (what is there rendered) 'union with Brahma.' Professor Rhys Davids, in his very able preface to the Sutta (p. 164), shows that 'union with Brahma' cannot, in this Sutta, mean adoption into God as the final goal of Buddhism; since, first, the idea of Brahma is not at all the same as the idea of God; and secondly, the union supposed could be only temporary —a 'temporary life as an angel in the Brahma heaven.'

But I am convinced that Professor Rhys Davids could safely have gone further on the lines of the words I have just quoted; and I confidently hope for his support—if he should read this—for what I am going to suggest.

The phrase 'a union with Brahma' in this Sutta represents three Pali phrases. Brahmasahavyatá (§ 41), Brahmuno Sahavyupajo (34, 81), and Brahmánam Sahavyatá (37). These mean respectively 'Brahma-companionship,' 'gone to the company of Brahma,' and 'companionship of *Brahmas*' (plural). The phrase, '(go) to be born in the companionship' ('upapajjanti tassa sattassa sahavyatam') is used in Brahmajála Sutta (§ 4), where there is obviously no idea of absorption or identification, but only of *living under the same conditions*. Further, in the Tevijja Sutta, the aim or hope in question is illustrated, not by any simile which implies union or absorption, but by the supposed aim of getting to the sun or moon (16), the desire to climb up into a dwelling (21), to cross a river (23), to cross to a 'happier land' (36). Finally, Gotama says that he is like one whose native country the *Brahma world* is, and therefore he can be in no difficulty about the way to *that world*.

There is nothing final about Brahma-life. Ordinary people after life as a Brahma-god descend to human or infra-human births; but a fairly-advanced monk, if reborn in the Brahma-world, will pass thence into Nirvána.[1]

Whatever then may have been the meaning of Brahma-sahavyatá in Brahmanical doctrine, in the Tevijja Sutta it implies only

[1] Angut. N. iv. 123.

'life in the Brahma world.'[1] In other places of Buddhism rebirth as Mahabrahma—the present Mahabrahma was once a man—is spoken of as attainable, and even after a Brahma-god life many descend even to infra-human births; but a fairly advanced monk will enter Nirvana thence.

Tissa Moggaliputta, who presided at the 'Third Council,' was 'a Mahabrahma' when he was invited to return to this world for that purpose.

If any doctrine of absorption is to be found in the Southern Buddhism, the texts for it have yet to be produced.

[1] The ordinary Buddhist phrase is 'Brahmalokupago.'

CHAPTER XVI

MEDITATION AND SUPERNATURAL ATTAINMENTS

THE theory of samádhi, the meditative state and the system of meditation, is seen in its commonest form on p. 334. The four stages of Jhána are briefly these. In the first the mind is at work, and both active pleasure and passive happiness are felt; in the second, the mind has ceased to act, but there are still the feelings of pleasure and happiness; in the third, active pleasure ceases, and a calm happiness alone remains; in the fourth, nothing remains but indifference to all emotions alike of pleasure and pain.

The attainment of this fourth stage is the starting point of various kinds of supernatural powers.

First, as is seen in the Sutta on p. 335, the supernatural capacities are obtained, that of remembering one's own former existences, and that of seeing the passage of all beings from life to life, to which are elsewhere added that of reading the thoughts of others, etc.

Again, the power of working miracles—especially of flying through the air, water, or earth,—of causing

startling displays, especially of flames and smoke,—of creating for the occasion bodies, or the appearance of bodies, and the like,—these and other miraculous gifts are represented as universally possessed by those who have attained the final stage of meditation. Again, one who has reached the fourth stage of meditation can pass thence into the formless worlds. These are sometimes spoken of as worlds, sometimes as states. The latter is the case in the description of the Buddha's last meditation.

This is often extended to actual journeys to the different heavens—those of Brahma, of the thirty-three gods,[1] etc.; and when monks are sent on errands of this kind it is sometimes noted, at any rate in the Commentaries, that they first entered the fourth stage of meditation. The method of getting into these states is that of fixing the mind very intently and exclusively on certain objects or topics; among which the body and its impurities hold the first place, impermanence, sorrow, and death, the second.

The following passage will show the mechanical nature of the process, akin, I suppose, to mesmerism, by which peculiar conditions are induced:

'And how does a monk abide in regard to the body observant of the true nature of the body? He goes into a forest, or to the foot of a tree, or into an empty house, and sits with his legs drawn-in cross-wise, his body set straight upright, and his conscious-

[1] See Childers's Dict., *s. v.* 'Jhánam.'

ness fixed before his face. With conscious recollectedness he draws in his breath, with conscious recollectedness he breathes it out. Drawing in a long breath, he is fully aware that he is drawing a long breath; or breathing out a long breath, he is fully aware that he is breathing out a long breath; so with a short inspiration or a short expiration. He trains himself to feel that the consciousness of breathing in or of breathing out pervades his whole body. He trains himself to feel that in breathing in or out he is calming the elements of which his body is composed. Just, monk, as a skilled turner,[1] or turner's apprentice, when he gives a long pull of the rope knows that he is giving a long pull, and when a short, a short one—so the monk is conscious (as said above).

'So he abides, as regards the body, externally observant of the true nature of the body, and (the same) internally, and (the same) both externally and internally; or he abides observant of the principles of origin in the body, or of those of decay, or of those both of origin and decay. Or the consciousness that it is body is firmly established in him, so as to increase to the full extent his insight and recollectedness, and he abides dependent on nothing, and does not lay hold of anything in the world.'[2]

[1] The allusion is to a turner who turns his lathe, or a driller who spins his drill, by pulling a string in alternate directions. The value of this attention to the breathing is said to be, that the monk thus learns that the breath does not constitute a soul but is only a constituent of the body. See *Questions of King Milinda* in *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xxxv. p. 48.

[2] Maj. Nik. 10.

The process may be assisted by intently gazing at an object called a kasina—a small circle of earth, water in a bowl, a spot of light, or a board with nine or sixteen pierced squares like a skeleton chess-board. Many stones carved with the latter design are still extant in Ceylon.

Somewhat less mechanical is the account supposed to be given by Gotama himself of his own method.[1]

Gotama says that before he was Buddha he inquired with himself into the pleasures, the dangers, and the way of getting rid of each of the four elements of earth, water, fire, and air. And he saw that the pleasure of each was whatever happiness arose from it; the danger was the tendencies in each to impermanence, sorrow, and decay; and the way to get rid of each was the restraint and abandonment of all desire and lust for it. When he had seen this he knew himself to be a Buddha.

Miracles being, as is pretended, of universal attainment to 'rahats,' are not treated as matters of great importance. Gotama despised them. He generally told one of his monks to make the display, if it was necessary in any case, to gain the attention of a layman or a multitude by such means. Those which he himself performed were, as a rule, such as the occasion rendered necessary, rather than displays intended to convince. (Those exhibited to the Jatilas are an exception, and are not the only reason for ascribing to that passage a later date than that of

[1] Sanyut. xii. 49.

the chapters which precede it.) He is represented as disparaging miracles as credentials, because any one may say they were done by magic, or by virtue of ordinary austerities.[1]

They are far too common to be at all striking, and in no way associated with the person or peculiar gifts of Gotama. Gotama's disciples are not represented as owing their miraculous endowments to Gotama, or to their connection with him; nor is Gotama represented as doing anything which his followers could not also do.

ABSTRUSE QUESTIONS.

If the discussion of abstruse questions was discouraged by the Buddha, it is not because they were not—at any rate in the time of the compilers—much on men's lips. We read constantly of such questions as are raised by antinomian, fatalist, or materialist, theories of the eternity of matter, and so on; and also of schools which evaded all by asserting the impossibility of knowing.[2] What became of the Tathágata after death was a question which the Buddha often declined to answer. Whether 'Tathágata' in that place means, as elsewhere, 'the Buddha,' or, as is commonly said, 'the individual,' I cannot attempt to decide. The Buddha met such questions by the counter question: 'Where does the fire go

[1] Dig. Nik. xi. *ab init.*

[2] All these are called by a name, 'diṭṭhi,' which, without absolutely calling them false, stigmatises them as mere 'views.' The word is generally rendered 'heresy.' Sixty-two are enumerated in Brahmajála S.

when it goes out?'[1] which leads him to the idea of the cessation of being by the removal of that on which life depends.

It may be worth while to give an abbreviated translation of this 'Vacchagotta's Fire Sutta.'

Gotama was asked: 'Do you hold the view that the world is eternal?' He replied, 'No.' 'That the world is not eternal?' 'No.' 'That it has an end?' 'No.' 'That it has not an end?' 'No.' 'That the life and the body are the same?' 'No.' 'That the life is one thing and the body another?' 'No.' 'That the individual exists after death?' 'No.' 'That he does not?' 'No.' 'That he both exists and does not exist after death?' 'No.' 'That he neither exists nor does not exist after death?' 'No.'

'How is this? You say "No" to all these questions. What is the evil that you see, that you entirely refuse to adopt any of these views?'

'Every one of these is a mere view (a heresy), is holding[2] to a heresy—belongs to the desert of mere opinion, the vain show of opinion, the writhings of opinion, the bonds of heresy; and involves pain, vexation, despair, and distress; it does not tend to dissatisfaction, or putting away desire, or the destruction or the quieting of it, or to knowledge, or absolute Buddha-insight, or to Nirvana.'

'Have you then any view?' 'This phrase "view"

[1] Maj. Nik. 72.

[2] The word for 'holding' is like the word for jungle, and suggests the metaphor, which is carried on in the next word.

the Buddha has put away. The Buddha has *seen* this: What form is, and its cause and its end; what sensation, its cause and its end; what perception, what conformation, what consciousness, and the cause and ending of each. Thus by the elimination, the extinction, the destruction, the abandonment, the putting away, the disattachment of all fancied and imaginary notions of self-asserting individualist pride, the Tathagata is set free.'

'Whither does the monk, whose mind is thus set free, go to be reborn?' 'The phrase "going to be reborn" does not apply.' 'Then is he not reborn?' 'The phrase as "not being reborn" does not apply.' 'Then is he both reborn and not reborn?' 'No.' 'Is he neither reborn nor not reborn?' 'No.'

'To all these questions you answer, "No!" Here I am utterly at a loss, utterly confounded, and all the satisfaction I had in former conversation with you, Gotama, is gone.'

'Be not at a loss, Vaccha, be not confounded! This doctrine is hard to see, hard to understand, solemn,[1] sublime, not resting on dialectic, subtle, and perceived only by the wise; it is hard for you to learn who are of different views, different ideas of fitness, different choice, trained and taught in another school. So let me ask you, Vaccha, this question, and answer it as you will. What think you? if fire is burning before you, you know: This is a fire burning before me. If asked what causes that fire to burn,

[1] Translated, 'which brings quietitude of heart.' *S.B.E.* vol. xii. p. 84.

what would you say? Its catching hold of grass and sticks (or, the fuel, viz. grass and sticks). If the fire goes out, you know that it is gone out?' 'Yes.' 'And if asked where it is gone, east, west, north, or south, what would you say?'

'The phrase does not apply, Gotama. When, by the exhaustion of the fuel, the grass and sticks, on which it has caught, and by the want of other supply, the fire has nothing to feed upon, it is said to be extinguished.'

'Just so, Vaccha, when that form, in virtue of which the individual is so called, is abandoned, rooted out, felled, destroyed, so that it can never come up again, the individual is freed from the appellation of form, is (in a condition) deep, immeasurable, difficult to sound as the great ocean; the phrase "he is born" does not apply, nor "he is not born," or the rest. So when that sensation, and that perception, and those elements of being, and that consciousness, in virtue of which he was called an individual, are gone, none of the phrases about being born or not being born are applicable to the case.' [1]

[1] D. N. 72.

CHAPTER XVII

CASTE

IT is not the case either that Gotama set himself to oppose the caste system, or that he announced as a prominent feature of his teaching—though he taught it—the equal admission of all (well-born) men into his Community.

He is represented as often speaking of the miseries of low caste,[1] and recognising the advantage of high caste, *ceteris paribus*.[2] The pride of his own Sakyan birth is owned, even in putting it aside;[3] and the observance of caste rules by Brahmans is commended.

As a matter of fact, he found, according to the records, most of his early followers in the two highest castes. He is thought, however, by modern Buddhists to have preferred middle rank, and to have held the cultivator class (gahapati) the most favourable for religion, because these were not tempted to take life either as princes for pride, or, as the very low castes, from poverty.

[1] Sanyut. iii. 2. 1, etc.
[2] Angut. iv. 85.
[3] Culla Vagga, vii. 1, 4.
[4] Sutta N. ii. 7.

Had it been the intention of Gotama, or of the after writers of the Pitakas, to announce a revolt against the caste system, it is not likely that they would have taught—as the Buddhavansa, or history of Buddhas does—that all the previous Buddhas had been either Brahmans or Khattiyas.

Some have thought that he announced at least a protest of the royal caste against the exclusive assumptions of the Brahmans. But the fact that the same Buddhavansa represents a majority of the previous Buddhas as Brahmans shows that this was not the tradition among his followers. In fact the supremacy of the Brahman caste is not clearly marked in the Pitakas; it is implied that the Khattiya was the highest.[1]

It is therefore an exaggeration to describe Gotama as a champion of equality against caste tyranny.

On the other hand, both his system and his teaching were indirectly opposed to it. All castes (of well-born men) were equally admissible to the Community;[2] it is not clear that any outcast would have been admitted. The idea of caste being a claim to *status* within the Community is repudiated;[3] all such distinctions are merged in the Community as the rivers in the sea.[4]

And as regards the dominion of caste outside the

[1] Sanyut. iii. 3. 6, etc.; Angut. iii. 13. 1.
[2] Maj. Nik. xl. *et passim*.
[3] Culla Vagga, vi. 6. 2. [4] Culla Vagga, ix. 1. 4.

Community, his teaching was calculated to undermine it. It was noble and just.

The passage in which Gotama is represented as refuting the notion that there is a difference of *species* between the castes has often been quoted; but cannot be omitted here. (The English reader may need to be reminded that the essence of 'caste' as distinguished from 'rank' is, that caste is a *birth* distinction, and supposed to be indelible. The word 'játi,' which we render by 'caste,' means also birth.) This celebrated passage is the Vásetṭha Sutta of the Sutta Nipáta, and is translated by Professor Fausböll in *Sacred Books of the East*, x. 109 *seq.* Vásettha and Bháradvaja refer to Gotama the controversy between them as to birth, whether one is a Brahman by birth or by deeds. 'I will explain to you, O Vasettha,' so said Bhagavat, 'in due order the exact distinction of living beings according to species, for their species are manifold. Know ye the grass and the trees, although they do not exhibit (it), the marks that constitute species are for them, and their species are manifold. Then (know ye) the worms and the moths and the different sorts of ants, the marks that constitute species are for them, and their species are manifold.'

The same is said of the four-footed animals, small and great; of the serpents, the long-backed snakes, of the fish which range in the water, of the birds that are borne along on wings and move through the air. As in these species the marks that

constitute species are abundant, so in men the marks that constitute species are not abundant. Not as regards their hair, head, ears, eyes, nose, lips, or brows; not as regards their neck, shoulders, belly, back, etc.; nor as regards their hands, feet, etc., or voice, are the marks that constitute species, as in other species. Difference then is in beings endowed with bodies, but amongst men this is not the case; the difference among men is nominal. For whoever among men lives by cow-keeping—know this, O Vasettha,—he is a husbandman, not a Brahmana.' 'And whoever among men lives by trade, he is a merchant, not a Brahmana. So with the artisan, the servant, the thief, the soldier, the king. And whoever among men lives by performing household ceremonies—know this, O Vasettha,—he is a sacrificer, not a Brahmana. And I do not call one a Brahmana on account of his birth or of his origin from (a particular) mother; he may be called "bhovádi," and he may be wealthy, (but) the one who is possessed of nothing and seizes upon nothing, him I call a Brahmana.' Then in twenty-seven stanzas the qualities of a good Buddhist disciple are enumerated as constituting the Brahmana: 'The man who knows his former dwellings, who sees both heaven and hell, and has reached the destruction of births, him I call a Brahmana.' For what has been designated as 'name' and 'family' in the world is only a term: what has been designated here and there is understood by common consent. Adhered to for a long

time are the views of the ignorant: the ignorant tell us, one is a Brahmana by birth. Not by birth is one a Brahmana, nor is one by birth no Brahmana; by work one is a Brahmana, by work one is no Brahmana, just as the husbandman, the artisan, the merchant, etc., are such by *what they do*. The discourse ends by insisting on Karma, the product of action, as the one great ruling force.

In Assaláyana Sutta we read (in Professor Rhys Davids's[1] translation) Assalayana says:—

'The Brahmans, O Gotama, say thus: the Brahmans are the best caste (literally, the best colour); every other caste is inferior. The Brahmans are the white caste; every other caste is black. The Brahmans alone are pure; those who are not Brahmans are not pure. The Brahmans are the (only) real sons of Brahma, born from his mouth, sprung from Brahma, created by Brahma, heirs of Brahma. But what do you, sir, say about this?'

Then the Buddha asks him whether the wives of Brahmans are not subject to all the ills and disabilities of child-birth to which other women are subject. Assalayana is obliged to confess that this is so, and that the Brahmans put forward their claims in spite of this.

The Buddha then, applying our modern comparative method of inquiry, asks whether in adjacent countries, such as Baktria and Afghanistan, there are not differences of colour similar to those between the

[1] Hibbert Lectures, p. 52.

Brahmans and other castes, and yet in these countries whether slaves cannot become masters, and masters become slaves? Again Assalayana confesses the fact, and that the Brahmans put forward their claims in spite of it.

Then Gotama goes on to ask: 'How think you, Assalayana, is a man who is a murderer, a thief, a libertine, a liar, a slanderer, violent or frivolous in speech, covetous, malevolent, given to false doctrine—will such an one, if he be a Khattiya, or a Vessa, or a Sudda, be born after death, when the body is dissolved, into some unhappy state of misery and woe, but not if he be a Brahman?'

Assalayana replies that the Brahman is in this respect exactly on a par with the others. Gotama then proceeds to put the contrary case, when Assalayana declares that those who do the contrary of all these evil things are equally reborn into some happy state in heaven, whether they are Brahmans or whether they are not.

Gotama asks what force or what comfort there can then be in the claim to especial purity which the Brahmans make. But he carries the argument still further. 'What think you, Assalayana, is it the Brahman alone who is able, in this land of ours, to cultivate friendliness, kindliness, charitable feelings; or can the Khattiya, the Vessa, and the Sudda do so too?'

And when Assalayana acknowledges that they are all equal in this respect, Gotama compels him to

grant also that they are equally pure in their bodies, and that the flame kindled by an outcast by means of two pieces of wood, belonging to a dog's drinking vessel or a pigsty, will light a sacred fire as shining and beaming and bright, and as good for sacrificial purposes, as a flame kindled by a Brahman or a Khattiya by means of sweet-smelling sandal-wood!

Then, still questioning, Gotama points out how—whereas when a mare is united with an ass, the offspring is a mule, different from both father and mother—the union of a Khattiya and a Brahman, or *vice versá*, results in offspring which resembles both the parents, with the obvious suggestion that there is not really any difference of species or caste between Khattiya or Brahman and half-caste or low-caste men, as there is in the case of a donkey and a horse.

Finally, Gotama asks the young Brahman scholar, 'To which of two brothers, one an initiated student and the other not, the Brahmans themselves would, on sacred and solemn occasions, give the precedence?'

'To the initiated student,' says Assalayana; 'for what thing given to an uninitiated person, not a student, will bear with it great advantage?'

'But if the initiated student be of bad character and evil habits, and the other be of good character and virtuous habits,' rejoins Gotama, 'to whom then will the Brahmans themselves give the precedence?'

'To the uninitiated,' is the reply; 'for what thing given to a man of bad character and of evil habits will bring with it great advantage?'

'But in the former answer you yourself, Assalayana,' says the master, 'have given up the pre-eminence of birth, and in the latter the pre-eminence of acquaintance with the sacred words. And in doing so you yourself have acknowledged that purity of all the castes which I proclaim!'

When he had thus spoken, the young Brahman Assalayana, says the Sutta, 'sat there silent, awkward, distressed, looking downwards, reflecting, not able to answer,'

Then Gotama tells a story, winding up with a kind word to the young scholar. And the Sutta concludes with the confession of Assalayana: 'Most excellent, Gotama, are the words of thy mouth—most excellent! May the venerable Gotama receive me as a disciple and as a true believer, from this day forth as long as life endures!'

In Madhura Sutta (Maj. Nik. v.) Gotama explains that all castes are ultimately equal, as the good, of whatever caste, will enjoy the like reward of their deeds in heaven, and the bad suffer alike in hell.

I add an abridged translation of Ambattha Sutta.

Ambaṭṭha, a young Brahman, is sent by his tutor, Pokkharasádi, to visit Gotama, and to find out whether the reports of his excellence are true; in particular whether he has the thirty-two marks, which mark one, who, if a layman, will be an universal emperor, if a religious, a Buddha. The monks welcomed him as a very well-born and distinguished person whom the Buddha would be glad to talk to.

Ambattha showed some discourtesy by not sitting down respectfully as was usual, but walking up and down or standing when he saluted Gotama. Gotama asked him whether it was his custom to salute elderly Brahmans in that way. 'No,' said Ambattha; 'a Brahman before entering into conversation with another Brahman would adopt the same attitude as the person he addressed. But to shavelings, monklings, mere householders,[1] black men, men sprung from the foot of Brahma, we use the same manner of address as I have used to you.' Gotama then asked him to remember his business, adding that he assumed the airs of a person of culture only because he was really uncultivated. This expression 'uncultivated' made Ambattha very angry, and he became openly insulting. 'The Sakya race is haughty, abusive, hasty, and overbearing.' Such mere rich men, he said, ought to pay reverence to Brahmans. Ambattha then gives an instance of their rudeness. When he once went on some business to one of their gatherings they poked and nudged one another and made fun, but took no notice of him. Gotama replies that even sparrows chatter and amuse themselves in their own nests, and Kapilavastu is the Sakya's home. Then Ambattha plainly states his claim. 'There are four castes, Gotama, — Khattiya, Brahmans, Vaisyas, Sudras; of these four, the three (Khattiya,

[1] *Ibbhá.* Of this and the following word curious and inconsistent explanations are given. The above is the best I can arrive at, as being nearest to the literal meaning; but it is difficult to be satisfied with it.

Vaisyas, Sudras) are attendants to wait on the Brahmans, so it is not right that mere householders like the Sakyans should not reverence the Brahmans.' This was the third time the young man Ambattha applied the expression 'mere householders' to the Sakyans.

Then Bhagava thought: This is too bad, the way this young Ambattha is disparaging the Sakyans as mere householders. Suppose I ask him about his own clan? So Gotama asked him: 'Of what clan are you, Ambattha?' 'I am a Krishnayan.' 'The Sakyans then, if you go back in the genealogy, are descended from your masters, and you are descended from a slave of the Sakyans.' And this he explains by a curious genealogical legend, according to which the Sakyans were derived from some banished princes of the family of the great Okkáka, while the Krishnayans descended from a slave woman of the same king.'

Hereupon the young men who had come with Ambattha struck in to the conversation. 'Do not so severely disparage Ambattha as slave-born. Ambattha is a noble and learned youth, and well able to hold his own with you.'

To which Gotama replies: 'If you hold that Ambattha is ill-born, and ignorant, and unable to maintain the discussion, then let him stand aside and you carry on the discussion with me; but if you hold Ambattha well-born, and learned, and competent, then you please stand aside, and let Ambattha and me talk.'

To this they agreed. Gotama then proposed a question to Ambattha. The form in which it is proposed is very curious, singularly un-Socratic, but frequently occurs in the Buddhist dialogues.

'Here, Ambattha, is a reasonable question which comes to you: against your will you must answer it. If you do not answer, or go from one thing to another, or are silent, or go away, then and there your head will split in seven. What think you, Ambattha?' What have you heard from the tradition of aged Brahmans as to the origin of the Krishnayans?'

Ambattha was silent. Gotama repeated the question. Ambattha was still silent. Then Gotama said: 'Answer now, Ambattha; this is no time for you to be silent. Whoever fails to answer when asked a reasonable question by the Tathagata for the third time, his head will split in seven.'

At the same time a demon with a blazing iron sledge-hammer stood in the air over Ambattha, ready to carry out the threat. Ambattha saw him, and his hair stood on end, and he ran for protection to Gotama, and begged him to ask his question again.

And when the question had been repeated Ambattha acknowledged that the received tradition of the Krishnayans' origin was exactly as the Buddha had stated it.

Ambattha's friends were then as strong in disparaging his birth as they had before been in maintaining it, and Gotama begged them not to speak so severely of him as slave-born, for the slave girl's son had become

a great Rishi, and had returned to King Okkáka and compelled him, by a threatening series of miraculous plagues, to give him his daughter.

Gotama then asked Ambattha, 'If a man is the son of a Khattiya by a Brahman woman, will he get seat and water among Brahmans?' 'He will.' 'And be admitted to share their dish and bowl?' 'Yes.' 'Will they admit him as a student of the mantras?' 'Yes.' 'Will they give him their daughters?' 'Yes.' 'Will Khattiyas anoint him to Khattiya rank?' 'No.' 'Why?' 'Because he is not born (of their caste) on the mother's side.' 'Will the son of a Brahman by a Khattiya woman be received to seat and water, bowl and dish, among Brahmans?' 'Yes.' 'Will they admit him as a student?' 'Yes.' 'Give him their women?' 'Yes.' 'Will Khattiyas anoint him?' 'No.' 'Why? 'Because he is not born (of their caste) on the father's side.'

'Then, Ambattha,' says Gotama, 'whether you look at it from the woman's side or from the man's,[1] the Khattiyas are higher and the Brahmans lower. Take the case of a Brahman who is expelled in disgrace by his fellow-Brahmans, will Brahmans receive him, or eat with him, or teach him?' 'No.' 'Will they give him their women?' 'No.' 'But if a Khattiya is expelled by Khattiyas, will Brahmans receive him, feed him, and teach him?' 'Yes.' 'Give him their daughters?' 'Yes.'

[1] This rendering is hardly borne out by the commentary, but I can find no other intelligible.

'Then even when a Khattiya is in the utmost disgrace, the Khattiyas are the superiors and the Brahmans the inferiors.'

This has all been an *argumentum ad hominem*; the true moral is attached at the end.

'It was a Brahman, Ambattha, who uttered the verse:—

"The Khattiya is best among those who reckon family,[1]
But the man of perfect conduct and knowledge is best among gods and men."

'And this, I think, Ambattha, is very well said.'

In the Saṁyutta Nikáya we read:—

'The youth in whom mastery and strength are found
A king bent on war would enlist rather than one who by birth was a son of the gods—
And so the man in whom are set the qualities of endurance and gentleness:
That noble-living man the wise will honour, low-born though he be.'

The following comes from Sanyut. vii. 1. 9. I suspect it to be a purely Brahmanical, as it certainly is a very ancient, piece of verse:—

'Ask not of race, but ask of conduct,
From the stick is born the sacred fire;
The wise ascetic though lowly born
Is noble in his modest self-control.

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[1] Ye gotta patisárino. Professor Rhys Davids, in a note to his *Questions of King Milinda* (*Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xxxv. p. 229), renders thus: 'Those who observe the rules of exogamous marriage,' as if 'going from family to family.' As I do not know the learned Professor's reasons, I follow the Buddhist authorities, ancient and modern; and I must say I think their interpretation suits the context better. I think this is one of the cases in which the Pali and Buddhist use of a word has diverged from the Sanscrit and Brahmanic use.

Subdued by truth, subject to discipline,—
Perfect in sacred lore, trained in holy conduct,
The truly invested sacrificer—him call to your rites,
He offers seasonably, and is worthy of the gift.'[1]

But the fact is, this teaching is a commonplace of the later Brahmanism as well as of Buddhism. In the Mahabhárata—where indeed there is a great deal that is thoroughly Buddhist in substance if not in origin[2]—we read for instance: 'The Brahmana who is vain and haughty, who is addicted to vices and wedded to evil and degrading practices, is like a Sudra. On the other hand, I consider a Sudra who is always advanced with these virtues—righteousness, self-restraint, and truthfulness,—as a Brahmana. A man becomes a Brahmana by his character.'

[1] I suspect that this originally meant, 'the sacrificer's fee,' and was adapted to the view of the Buddhist monk as the proper recipient of gifts,—the 'merit-field.'

[2] The Udyoga Parva is a link between the Tevijja Sutta, for instance, and the later Brahmanism.—See Udyoga Parva, pp. 133, 216 (English translation).

CHAPTER XVIII

DISCIPLINARY RULES OF THE COMMUNITY

THE disciplinary rules of the Community, as distinguished from the moral rules, need not detain us very long. They have in great part already come before us. The foundation, it is often said, of the monastic life consists in the four 'Resources,' the minimum of dwelling, dress, food, and condiments. These and their qualifications are dwelt upon, in the Vinaya Pitaka, in the minutest detail, by the enumeration, for instance, of all the possible materials of which slippers may or may not be made; but the important and characteristic features of the rule are but few. The chief topics may be thus distinguished: the conditions and ceremonies of admission into the Community; the method of conducting its business, in what we should call 'chapters;' and the seasons for assembly and retirement.

Admission, etc.—Boys were to be admitted to the condition of novices—who had renounced the world but not entered into the full profession of the Community—from the age of fifteen,[1] though in exceptional cases boys might be admitted earlier—when old 'enough to

[1] Maha Vagga, i. 50.

scare crows.'[1] The candidate was to have his head shaved, to put on the yellow robes, and to declare his trust by the three-fold repetition of the formula: 'I take refuge in the Buddha, I take refuge in the Doctrine, I take refuge in the Community.'[2]

Each younger monk was to be under a tutor, and the relation between them was to be like that of son to father, every possible respect, attendance, and consideration being due on the part of the pupil, and all possible help and guidance on the part of the tutor.[3] A very similar relation was that between scholar and instructor; in fact, it is hardly possible to say what the distinction between the two relations was.[4] A tutor was not to present more than one novice at a time, unless he was himself unusually competent.

Cripples and deformed persons, slaves, debtors, and criminals, persons in the king's service, and *animals*, were expressly disqualified from admission;[5] nor could any one be admitted without the express permission of his parents.[6]

The novitiate continued at least until the age of twenty, and then full admission might be conferred. This important ceremony could not take place except

[1] Maha Vagga, i. 51. [2] *Ib.* i. 54.

[3] *Ib.* i. 25. It does not appear that at first this relationship ended with the full profession of the pupil. Maha Vagga, i. 31. 33.

[4] *Ib.* i. 32.

[5] See Maha Vagga, i. 63. It is amusing to read 'Let the animal, O Bhikkhus, that has has not received the "upasampadá ordination" not receive it; if it has received it, let it be (expelled from the fraternity).' *Sacred Books of the East*, xiii. p. 219. The second question asked of the candidate for full admission was to be 'Are you a human being?'

[6] Maha Vagga, i. 54; see Ch. iv. p. 59.

in a chapter of at least ten, and the monk who, as tutor, presented the candidate, must have been himself at least ten years in full profession.[1] The candidate was to be warned, lest he should afterwards find the life harder than he expected, that he could not expect more than the minimum of necessary things, etc.: viz., for food, morsels given in alms; for clothing, rags from a dust-heap; for dwelling, the foot of a tree; for medicine, or condiment, a filthy liquid. All beyond these, he was to be warned, was indulgence—not forbidden, but not to be claimed.

The candidate, having been carefully instructed as to his part in the ceremony, was asked whether he was in any way disqualified; for instance, by leprosy or certain other diseases, by debt, etc.; whether he was twenty years old, and had his parents' consent; and who was his tutor. He then made his humble request three times to the Community to 'draw him out' (of the world) and receive him. A resolution to that effect having been duly proposed and carried, he repeated the refuges, was warned of the four great faults which involve expulsion,[2] and so was received into full status in the Community.[3]

Assemblies, chapters, etc.—The institution of the Uposatha,[4] or day of strictness ('abstinence' in a general sense, rather than 'fasting'), is said to have

[1] Maha Vagga, 31, 49. [2] Maha Vagga, i. 78; see Ch. xiii. p. 193.

[3] It is curious that this procedure is not laid down in any one place in order, but has to be collected from scattered chapters. See Professor Davids's note, *Sacred Books of the East*, xiii. p. 233.

[4] Sinhalese 'pohoya,' popularly 'poya.'

been adopted from the custom of some Brahman ascetics, who used to recite their doctrine on the four quarter-days of the moon—the 8th and the 14th or 15th of each half-month.[1]

The Vinaya does not prescribe any other recitation of doctrine for these days than the recitation of the compendium of the moral rule called Pátimokkha.[2] This was so recited as to form a method of self-examination for the assembled monks. They were to come together—all within a certain defined area—the smallest number being four; and any one who was absolutely prevented from coming was to send by a proxy the assurance of his having kept the rule. The Patimokkha manual[3] was recited from memory by some chosen monk, audibly and carefully, the rest solemnly promising attention, and undertaking to disclose any breach of the rule of which they might have been guilty. When no fault was disclosed, as rule after rule was recited, the officiant was to say, 'I take it, from your silence, that you are clear,' and so to proceed. How confession was to be made when there was a fault to be confessed, the original rules[4] do not say. It must have been intended that it should be confessed to the whole chapter. But it is elsewhere provided that no one conscious of a fault should come at all, that one should confess his fault

[1] It is often expressed as if in each half-month there were three such days, the 8th, 14th, and 15th, but as the language is not consistent we may conclude that it means what common sense suggests and the practice of Buddhists confirms.

[2] See Ch. xiii. p. 191 *n.*

[3] The meaning of the term is uncertain.

[4] Maha Vagga, ii. 3 *seq.*

privately to a brother monk before coming into the assembly,[1] and that if a fault occurred to the memory of any one who had come, he should privately consult his neighbour about it.[2] Out of this probably grew the latter form of the procedure, according to which each monk was to make confession secretly to his neighbour.

Here may be mentioned a somewhat similar ceremony called Pavárańá, which was appointed[3] to take place at the end of the annual retirement, or 'was.' The monks were to assemble, and each in turn, from the eldest down, was to invite the rest to tell him of any fault which had been seen or heard or suspected in him. With the principle of such a ceremony, the detailed rules (as in the case of the Patimokkha) are inconsistent; for they assume that the course will be, if any fault is alleged, not to tell it in answer to the above invitation, but by alleging it beforehand to exclude the delinquent from the ceremony altogether. The theory of mutual candour, on which the institution was based, was too high for practice. The detailed rules are concerned with preventing false accusations.

On *uposatha* days it is not originally prescribed that any other business should be done besides the recitation of the manual, but it seems clear that it was on those days, as a rule, that the other business of the Community was transacted in chapters. Whether the matter in hand were the admission of a novice or a

[1] Maha Vagga, ii. 27. 1. [2] *Ib.* ii. 27. 4. [3] *Ib.* iv.

monk, the appointment of a reader, a manager of the dining-hall, or other officer, the delimitation of boundaries, the decision of a disputed question about a rule or a text; in every case the chapter proceeded by a fixed method of resolution. A leading or senior monk proposed it, saying, 'Let the Community of mendicants hear me! Such and such a thing is proposed. Let any one who is in favour of it be silent, and any one who is against it speak. I put it to you the second time (in the same form) and a third time.' He then announces the result: 'The Community is in favour of it, therefore it is silent. This I take to be the decision.' In some cases the proposals were announced only once before the question was put, but the method was always substantially the same. In such chapters members guilty of the great offences were to be expelled; others were to be censured, suspended, or restored. The Uposatha Hall would thus grow to be, what it is now in Ceylon, the chapter-house of the local branch of the Community.

Seasons, etc.—Was.—The rule that a portion of the year should be spent, not in travelling about, as the Buddha and his followers at first travelled, but in retirement, is said to have been suggested to Gotama by the complaints of people who were scandalised at seeing his monks walking about at that season. In the rains, they said, the earth is covered with young plants and multitudinous germs of life, and even the heretical ascetics are careful to avoid injuring these, and make themselves retreats, as the birds make them-

selves nests, at that season of the year.[1] There was a choice of two periods for beginning the retreat,—the full moon of June-July and that of July-August; in either case it was to last three months. For an urgent need, connected with religion, the monk might leave the place in which he had resolved to keep the 'was' (rainy season), but on no account for more than seven days. Care was to be taken in the choice of a place, lest the period should be interrupted; and several unsuitable places or modes of retirement, such as the branch of a tree, or under an earthenware vessel, were forbidden. It is curious, however, and an indication of the unreality of these rules, that to spend the time in a caravan on a journey, or in a ship, was allowed.[2]

The place seems, as a rule, to have been a regular Vihára, often apparently that in which the monk always lived (by Buddhaghosha's time this seems to have been the usual way[3]), but already in Gotama's time the custom began which now gives its character to the 'was' in Ceylon, of great people inviting monks to spend the 'was' with them.[4]

There is no prescribed way of passing the time, nor are any special duties assigned (in the Vinaya) to this season of 'the rain.'

On the whole, the life of a member of the Buddha's Community was encumbered by very few rules. Of rules to prevent indulgence there is an immense ac-

[1] Maha Vagga, iii. 1.

[2] Maha Vagga, iii. 12.

[3] See the passage quoted, *Sacred Books of the East*, xiii. 299 *n.*

[4] Maha Vagga, iii. 14. 1.

cumulation, but there was very little demand made on the monk's time. The aim in view was to secure him freedom, and to leave him time and room to train himself. Against idleness and all the other ills which too much leisure and too much solitude bring, the precautions were few and ineffective. In contrast with the endless interference with individual freedom which marked the Brahman system, the liberty which Gotama offered must have been charming indeed. But a life almost without social duties and entirely without necessity for exertion, physical or mental, is not a life which the average man can lead with safety. As Aristotle said of solitude, it is fit only for either a god or a beast. There is too much propriety in the favourite similes in which it was compared by the Buddhists themselves to the life of an elephant or a rhinoceros.

CHAPTER XIX

THE FEMALE COMMUNITY

THE Community of Nuns was never in practice a very important part of Buddhism, either in the primitive Indian system or in Ceylon; though it may have been specially fostered for a while in Asoka's day. It is represented in the Vinaya Pitaka as an afterthought, and as one reluctantly admitted by the Buddha. The part of the Vinaya which contains this is closely associated with parts which are, by their own showing, of late date, certainly after 381 B.C., and, as I think, little, if at all, earlier than 250 B.C. But the lateness of the book (C. V. x.) does not prevent our believing that a true tradition is recorded in it. Gotama is said to have been entreated to form a community of nuns, on the pressing and repeated application of his aunt, Mahápajápati, who had nursed him after his mother's death. Three times the application was refused. Mahápajápati cut off her hair and put on yellow robes, and appeared travel-worn and tearful before Ananda, who was moved to plead her cause. Even to Ananda the request was granted only with great reluctance. Eight rules were laid down, which appear mainly

intended to regulate the relation of dependence in which the female community was to stand towards the male; and Pajápati was admitted. Nothing is said of the admission of others with her, but it is constantly taken for granted that there were many. Thus, although the application of Pajápati is recorded in detail, the account of the formation of the Female Community is very meagre indeed in comparison with that of the Community of Men.

But what is most curious is the prophecy attributed to the Buddha in reference to this institution. He had no sooner instituted it than he announced, as we read, that it would be the ruin of his work! 'If, Ananda, women had not received permission to go out from the household life and enter the homeless state, under the doctrine and discipline proclaimed by the Tathágata, then would the pure religion, Ananda, have lasted long; the good law would have stood fast for a thousand years. But since, Ananda, women have now received that permission, the pure religion, Ananda, will not now last so long; the good law will will now stand fast for only five hundred years. Just, Ananda, as houses in which there are many women, and but few men, are easily violated by robber burglars, just so, Ananda, under whatever doctrine and discipline women are allowed to go out from the household life into the homeless state, that religion will not last long. And just, Ananda, as when the disease called mildew falls upon a field of rice in fine condition, that field of rice does not continue long;

just so, Ananda, under whatsoever doctrine and discipline women are allowed to go forth from the household life into the homeless state, that religion will not last long. And just, Ananda, as when the disease called blight falls upon a field of sugar-cane in good condition, that field of sugar-cane does not continue long; just so, Ananda, under whatsoever doctrine and discipline women are allowed to go forth from the household life into the homeless state, that religion does not last long. And just, Ananda, as a man would in anticipation build an embankment to a great reservoir, beyond which the water should not overpass; just even so, Ananda, have I in anticipation laid down these eight chief rules for the Bhikkhunis, their life long not to be overpassed.'[1]

It is not likely that this would have been inserted without some foundation. It is followed by Rules for Nuns, but these contain very little that is of importance. They were to follow the rules prescribed for monks as far as they were applicable, and in other matters to be guided by their own sense of what was best. Their relation to the Community of men was altogether dependent. Their acts were not valid without confirmation by the monks, and they had to repair to the monks for instruction.

In other parts of the Vinaya the existence of nuns is constantly taken for granted, but there are scarcely any direct accounts of them or of any institutions connected with them. The pious women who

[1] Culla Vagga, x. 1, 6; *Sacred Books of the East*, xx. p. 325.

are prominent, and there are many, in the Vinaya Pitaka narratives, are not nuns.[1]

In other Pitaka books it is the same, with at least one exception. The 'double-community' is constantly taken for granted; all that has been said of the monks is constantly repeated of the nuns, but their existence is still chiefly a theoretical existence.

Professor Oldenberg (*Buddha*, p. 381) says: 'It is to be doubted, whether at any time there was inherent in the spiritual sisterhood a degree of influence which could be felt, bearing on the Buddhist community as a whole.' This is a very cautious way of stating it. The Professor remarks in a note that the numbers given in the Dipavansa of monks and nuns in Asoka's day, exaggerated as they are, throw a certain light on the relative importance of the two orders. 'The chronicle speaks of 800,000,000 of monks, and of only 96,000 nuns;' one nun to more than 10,000 monks.[2]

The exception (known to me: there may be others) is the book called Therigáthá, or 'Stanzas spoken by female elders.' The verses which this book contains are, some of them, old; but the greater number belong to the latest stage of the Pitaka collection, being crowded with technical terms and lists, and being in fact, in some instances, summaries of the allusions, metaphors, and striking expressions which the older books contain. In most

[1] No individual nun is mentioned, with a very trifling exception, in the Vinaya, except Pajápati and Uppalivanná, both in Culla Vagga, x.

[2] But there are many instances in which the proportion is very different.

cases these verses have no historical setting, and throw no light on the history of the institution of nuns. In a few, they are attributed to persons whose names occur in the Vinaya in connection with Gotama's life, such as Mahápajápati, his aunt, Nandá, Ambapáli, etc. But even in these cases, they are merely verses which any one might have written, and to which those names are affixed. It cannot be said, therefore, that the Therigáthá add anything to our knowledge of the nuns.

Most of them narrate, very briefly or at some length, the religious 'experiences' of the supposed authors. They generally end by saying: 'I have attained Nirvána;' 'this is my last body;' 'Mara (or death), thou hast no more power over me.' Some say: 'It is now just a week since I attained emancipation.'

They say how long they had gone on—sometimes many years—without making any progress, and on what occasion they were converted. Several claim to have been converted by the Buddha himself, and at such and such a place. A great many owe their conversion to a very earnest nun called Patácára. And they tell us of their former life. 'I was rich and lived in luxury;' 'I was high born and courted by many;' another was a fire-worshipper, or a heretic, or a very bad woman. Some comment on their own loss of beauty, and draw a moral from the ravages old age has made on them.

Several of the later and longer passages describe nuns resisting the entreaties of lovers who say:—

'An' ye sall walk in silk attire,
And siller hae to spare;'

or of parents who urge that the suitor

'is chief of Erringtoun,
And lord of Langly Dale.'

The last of all is an elaborate and almost romantic account of the Princess Sumedha, whom the beautiful prince Anikaratta, with all that her parents could do to aid him, tried in vain to divert from her resolution to renounce the world.

As regards later history, Asoka speaks in the latest (probably) of his edicts of the many 'female mendicants.' This is indisputable evidence of the existence of the institution in his day. In the account of Mahinda, the converter of Ceylon, and his sister Sanghamitta, the bearer of the Bo-branch, we shall see great importance given to the female community, as founded in Ceylon. The Mahavansa tells us what multitudes of women then entered it. But the position of the institution in the Mahavansa is very similar to its position in the Vinaya Pitaka. After its foundation it hardly appears again, except in allusions. The existence of a female community is taken for granted,—a king sends his daughter to the convent, or he builds a hall for the nuns,—but except in this incidental way, they make no figure in the chronicle.

The traditions of Ceylon are in keeping with this. There are, so far as I know, no places named after nuns; no stories about famous nuns; none of their dwellings or halls, so far as we know, remain.

In the later centuries, when the Sinhalese kings brought monks, to revive the institution of monks, from Burma or Siam, we never read of their bringing nuns, or noticing the want of them. There are none in Ceylon now; and the received opinion, I believe, agrees with the conclusion to which I have been led, that the institution of female mendicants was never much developed either in Magadha or in Ceylon.[1]

[1] The subject is treated historically in Ch. xxvi. p. 391.

CHAPTER XX

ASOKA

THE earliest, and indeed very far the earliest point, at which we can say that there is indisputable historical evidence in regard to Buddhism, is the point furnished by the Edicts of Asoka.

The genius of Indian nations seems to have been at all times averse to history, and it is commonly said that India offers no solitary instance of a historical work till the Sinhalese Pali chronicles of the fourth and fifth century A.D. These chronicles are evidently founded on records which, for perhaps several centuries, had been kept in the Buddhist monasteries. When and at what date they began to be kept we have at present no means of saying; but the records which the chronicles of the fifth century embody certainly contain—as we shall presently see—genuine material, from a date as far back as the time of the Edicts. But the veracity of the chronicles is an inference from their agreement with the Edicts, and it is in the Edicts alone that we obtain first-hand contemporary evidence.

These Edicts were carved in stone in the second and third quarters of the third century B.C.

Of many of them there are a considerable number of contemporary copies, each edict having been engraved, by order of the king, in a number of widely distant places. Of others there are but two copies, and of some only one; but all suspicion that any of them may be a later forgery is excluded by the nature of the material, the form of the writing, and the contents. The date of some is proved beyond dispute—if they are not forgeries, which has never been suggested—by the mention in them of the Greek kings of the Bactrian Empire in North-west India, who are claimed by the writer as his contemporaries.

To go a little further into detail. These inscriptions of Asoka are carved, some on the living rock, some on pillars, and some on tablets. There are thus three groups, among which the rock-inscriptions are the oldest, and with one exception, the most interesting. Which is older and which later is not a matter of conjecture; for the king tells us, in most instances, in what year of his reign the particular inscription is set up. The fourteen rock Edicts date from the thirteenth and fourteenth years of his reign, two of the tablets from the thirteenth, the pillars from the twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth years, and the (second) Bairât or Bhabra inscription (which is on a granite boulder small enough to have been removed to the Museum at Calcutta) is probably latest of all. The last mentioned is of peculiar interest.

The reader will see that we have here guaranteed contemporary evidence for the facts—whatever they

are—which the inscriptions disclose, as to the events and the state of things in the reign of their author. Who then was their author? The name of Asoka is not to be found in them. The author is Piyadasi, or in full, Devánampiya Piyadasi Rája (King Piyadasi the delight of the gods), as he styles himself in most of them. Here is the most usual beginning: 'King Piyadasi, the delight of the gods, says.' Why then are these still popularly called the 'Edicts of Asoka'? Because Asoka and Piyadasi are two names of the same person, and Asoka is the one by which he is best known to the Sinhalese Chronicles, and from them was first known to the European world.

The history of the identification of Piyadasi with Asoka is one of the romantic chapters in the history of knowledge.[1] Charles Turnour, a high official in the Ceylon Civil Service, made acquaintance, by the help of Sinhalese scholars, with the Pali Chronicles—the Mahawansa or Great History, and the Dípawansa or History of the Island—which had been preserved in Ceylon, and he published[2] a description of the former, with a translation of part of it, which laid the foundation of all subsequent study, both of the Pali language and of Buddhist history. The portion to which his attention and that of his readers was specially directed was that earlier part of the chronicles which includes the record of the conversion of the island to Buddhism by Mahinda in the days of the great Asoka.

[1] Sénart's *Inscriptions de Piyadasi*, vol. i. p. 3 *seq.*
[2] 1837 A.D. and onwards.

It was there described how the great Asoka, king of Magadha, had been a famous patron of Buddhism. Having been originally a Brahman, he was converted, said the historian, to Buddhism, and set himself to propagate it all over his vast kingdom, which extended over the whole of India, and even beyond the borders of his dominion. He erected innumerable 'dágabas' or relic-shrines, and maintained innumerable monks. He sent out missionaries to preach the Buddhist doctrines everywhere; and in particular, under his auspices, his son Mahinda introduced them into Ceylon.

Such was the statement of these old Pali chroniclers which Mr. Turnour brought to light. But this was not all. The chronicles were not indefinite, but dealt with dates. They contained a complete list of kings, not only onwards from the regions of mythology to the days of Gotama Buddha, but from those days onwards without intermission to the dates at which they could be adjusted, in the sixteenth and following centuries, with European history. Turnour then gave to the world a chronological history of Buddhism, which included, of course, a definite date assigned to Asoka. It was true that, beside the list of kings, with the length of each one's reign, ran another list, that of the succession of presiding monks, and that the two lists did not exactly tally; but the discrepancy was only of some sixty years, and Mr. Turnour suggested a very probable way of accounting for it. Thus to those who were acquainted with Mr.

Turnour's work, Asoka was a known personage with a definite character, and a definite place in history.

This was known, however, to comparatively few, when, from the other end of the vast region which Asoka claimed, the other side of his history—the other half of the token—was brought to light. Asoka began to speak for himself; or rather, Piyadasi spoke, and his tones and language revealed his identity with Asoka.

In the years 1837 and 1838 the indefatigable genius of James Prinsep, by comparison of many scattered inscriptions and coins, discovered the key to the long-lost alphabet, or alphabets, in which these edicts, and a quantity of monuments only less ancient, are engraved. The deciphering of unknown alphabets, though by the aid of a bilingual text Champollion had accomplished it for the hieroglyphics, was a less common achievement than it has since become, and there were but few hints from outside the inscriptions themselves. But Prinsep noticed, while copying a certain group of short inscriptions, each of which stood by itself on one of the pillars round the dagaba of Sanchi, that two characters occurred invariably at the end of each. The pillars seemed likely to contain the record of some pious offering, and the inspiration came to him that these characters might be the word for 'gift.' He applied this key, tested the two letters in one connection after another under that supposition, and found that it solved the problem; the two letters with the point

which followed them did represent DÁNaM 'donation.' In a marvellously short time,—for the characters are large and the inscriptions are in the main extremely distinct,—several inscriptions, those on the Pillar of Feroz Shah at Dehli and others, had been provisionally deciphered, and an attempt at a translation was published. They contained such passages as the following:[1]—

'Thus saith King Piyadasi, beloved of the gods, I have caused this edict to be engraved in the twenty-seventh year of my consecration.

'What is this religion? It is to avoid evil and to do good, to practise kindness, truth, and liberality, and purity of life.

'I have given alms to men and animals, supplied them with water, etc. I have instituted officers to promote religion in all the countries,' etc.

Mr. Turnour no sooner saw the proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal than he sprang, with a confidence which further inquiry justified, to the conclusion, that these were inscriptions of the Asoka of the Mahawansa. The evidently vast extent of his rule, the name of Magadha itself,[2] the humane tone of his proclamations, were enough to invite the identification; the statement that he had not always held the same views, but had formerly been regardless of the life of animals, that his conversion occurred some

[1] Not taken exactly from any one edict, but see second Pillar Edict.

[2] It is found only in the inscription of Bairat. In the fifth Girnár Edict the king writes 'at Pátaliputta,' where the corresponding copies have 'here.'

years after his enthronement, and other such coincidences, made it almost a certainty. But when it was further disclosed that in one of the edicts were mentioned certain Greek kings, Ptolemy, Magas, and others, whose date approximately coincided with that which the Pali Mahawansa ascribed to Asoka; and further still, that Asoka was said, in the chronicle, to have been the grandson of Chandragupta, while Greek history placed in the same place and date a Sandrakottus (an almost exact transliteration of the same name) the fact that one was Asoka and the other Piyadasi could not stand in the way of the identification. For, indeed, what does Asoka mean, but 'sorrowless,' or Piyadasi but 'beholder of delight'? They were both rather epithets than names, and of kindred meaning.

But whatever doubt might remain in the most sceptical mind was soon to be removed. It was soon observed that, although the Mahawansa knew this monarch only as Asoka, its sister chronicle—its elder sister, if not its parent chronicle—the Dipawansa (history of Ceylon) knew him as Piyadasi. When the lines, 'Asoka was anointed king in Mahinda's fourteenth year. Asokadhamma, after his coronation, obtained the miraculous faculties; exceedingly splendid and rich in meritorious works (he was) universal monarch of Jambudípa. They crowned Piyadassi, etc,'[1] were quoted, the question was at an end. The veracity of Turnour's Ceylon chronicles

[1] Dip. vi. 22–24, Oldenberg's translation.

was established to an unexpected extent, and the edicts could be studied with the certainty that they were contemporary evidence of a known date. Further discoveries and decipherment added further confirmation to this conclusion.[1]

The reader will now wish to know what are the contents of these inscriptions, which promise information so certain. Is its extent and definiteness equal to its historical certainty?

First, however, it will be well to state with more detail the proof of Piyadasi's position in chronology; and in order to do that I must give a fuller account of the inscriptions. The order in which they were discovered is less important for this purpose than the order in which they were issued by the king.

The rock-inscriptions fall into two groups. In the earlier group, there are five principal rock-inscriptions, all bearing the name of Piyadasi,—one at Girnár in Gujarat district, carved on the face of a nearly vertical rock, in letters some 1⅕ inches in length, and covering a space some 17 feet in height, by about 8 feet at the base; another, somewhat similar in position and extent, and containing in the main the same contents, at Dhauli in Orissa; a third, at Jaugada in the same district; at Khálsi, near Masúri, on the Upper Jumna, there is a fourth. All these are in the same characters, and except in so far as some—those of the two Orissa rocks especially—are

[1] The supposed date, '256 years after the Buddha,' in the Sahasarám Edict, rested on a mistranslation. See note on p. 276.

defaced or defective, all contain the same contents, with variations which, for our present purpose, are trifling. Another at Sháhbáz-garhi, near Kapur-di-giri, in the far north-west, not far from Attock, on the Upper Indus, is in a different writing, but has substantially the same contents. Each of these inscriptions is not one edict, but a series of edicts, the total series numbering fourteen. But the whole fourteen do not appear on each rock : all fourteen are at Girnar, at Khalsi, and at Kapur-di-giri, but only eleven at Dhauli, and at Jaugada ; nor are all perfect in each place, nor are the different copies identical in every detail.

Though issued in succession, at intervals within a period of three years, between the eleventh and the fourteenth years of the king, they appear, on each of the rocks where they are now found, to have been all engraved at the same time, that is, after the issue of the latest, which was probably engraved in the king's fourteenth year.

It is utterly improbable that the five rocks which have been discovered were the only ones on which these edicts were inscribed; they are no doubt the survivors, through the chances of twenty centuries, of a multitude of which the majority have disappeared.[1] On some—on one at least—of the lost ones, the

[1] The king writes in the fourteenth Rock Edict, 'My realm is vast, and I have cut many inscriptions, and shall have (many more) cut.' And in the eighth Pillar Edict he speaks of the 'doctrine-pillars' which he has set up ; and at the end of that edict he implies that it will be engraved both on rocks and on pillars in many places.

edicts were probably inscribed, not all at one time, but each as it was issued. But the rock of Girnar, for instance, contains, we may suppose, all the edicts of the three years, collected, as it were, into a volume. The contents of the fourteenth imply that it is the close of a series; and state that the edicts have been issued in various forms, abridged, medium, and full. Everything tends to confirm the opinion that we have them here put together *in the order in which they were issued.*

Besides the fourteen, which these five rocks contain, two other edicts are found separately at two of the same five places, Dhauli and Jangada. They differ considerably in tone and style from the fourteen, being addressed to the authorities of particular districts. Two more have been found on rocks at Rupnáth, and at Sahasarám, both on the Kaimur Hills. These belong to the earlier periods—one of them is probably the earliest of all.

As time went on, it seems to have struck the king that instead of looking out natural rocks, which, of course, could not always be found in places suitable to his purpose, he might erect stone pillars of his own, and carve his proclamations on them. At Allahabad, at Dehli, at Rupnath, and at Sahasaram, pillars have been found which contain among them eight edicts, all of which are of the king's later years.

Finally, the latest probably (though carved on a rock and undated), and from its explicitly Buddhist language the most important to us of all, was

found at Bairat or Bhabra, and is now, as has been said, in the Museum at Calcutta.

Now in the thirteenth of the Rock Edicts—of which copies occur only at Girnar, Khalsi, and Kapur-di-giri—occurs that mention of the Greek kings on which so much hangs. The text is not perfectly decipherable, but enough for the purpose is certain. It is read thus: 'It is in the conquest of religion that the king dear to the gods takes pleasure, both in his own empire and in all the frontiers, over an area of many hundreds of yojanas. Among these are Antiochus (Aṁtiyogo or Aṁtiyoko), the king of the Yavanas; and on the north of this Antiochus four kings, Ptolemy (Turámaye Turamáyo or Tulamaye), Antigonus (Aṁtekena Antakáṇa or Aṁtikini), Magas (Maka Magá or Máká), Alexander (Alikasandale or Alikasudaro); on the south the Codas, the Pándyas, as far as Tambapanni (Ceylon),' etc.

Antiochus is mentioned also in the Second Edict.

We must turn to Greek history for a moment. The reader will remember that Alexander the Great invaded India in the years 329-326, and returned to Babylon only to die—in 323—leaving his conquests to be quarrelled over by his generals. In the division which ensued, the Indian province fell to Seleucus Nicator. This prince first opposed and then supported the rising power of Sandracottus, between whose dynasty and the Greek rulers of the Bactrian kingdom and of the regions further west, a close alliance appears to have continued. The names

Antiochus, Ptolemy, Antigonus, Magas, were all somewhat common among the successors and descendants of the Macedonian generals; but there was but one period, as might be expected, and that a short one, in which four kings of these four names were reigning at the same time. This was from the year 260 to 258. Then the five names were borne by Antiochus II. of Syria, Ptolemy Philadelphus, Antigonus Gonatas of Macedonia, Magas of Cyrene, and Alexander of Epirus. Unless, therefore, Piyadasi was misinformed (and it is possible one might have recently died without his knowing it), the thirteenth edict must have been issued between 260 and 258 B.C. Since this series of edicts belongs to the period between the eleventh and the fourteenth year from the king's solemn anointing or consecration, that event must have been about 270 B.C. (These dates do not differ by more than two or three years from those which are obtained, a reasonable correction being admitted, from the Sinhalese Great History.) The latest dated edict belongs to the king's twenty-eighth year.

For the years, therefore, from 260 to 230, the evidence of the Asoka inscriptions is good; and we come at last to the question, 'What picture of Buddhism do we find here?'

It will clear the ground if I say first what we do not find. We do not find expressions, as the Three Pitakas or Vinaya or Sutta, which are the titles of the present collection of books. We find no allusions to the Four Truths, or to the Twelve Causes, to

Karma, or to Nirvana; the technical terms under which virtues and vices are grouped in the books are never, or scarcely ever, found here; we meet with no 'agati,' or 'nivaranaṁ,' no 'silaṁ, samádhi, paññá.'[1]

If the series stopped short of the Bairat inscription, we should have to add that there would not be —and there is not in any of the edicts of the king's earlier years—any mention of Buddha, or 'bhikkhu,' or of any treatises of religion.[2] We should have said without reserve, the Buddhism of Asoka is not the Buddhism of the Pitakas.

Not that there is in the earliest edicts no system, nothing technical. On the contrary, there are two at least, classes of officials (rajjuká and 'dhammamahámátá') who play in the king's system an important part, but are unknown to the books. There are institutions, especially that of a quinquennial assembly, of which the Pitakas say nothing.

Only in the last, the Bairat inscription, the king definitely addresses the Community of Magadha; professes his attachment to the Buddha, the Law, and the Community; speaks of the 'utterances of the Buddha' (Bhagavatá Budhena bhásitaṁ) as all good; and commends certain treatises, one of which is termed a Sutta, especially to be studied by his sub-

[1] If M. Sénart is right in finding 'ásava' in the 'ásinave' of the second and third Pillar Edicts, it is an important exception; but the three instances of 'ásinava' given in the Third Edict are not the three 'ásavas' of the books.

[2] The word 'saṁgha,' the title of the Community, in the Edict of Sahasarám, must still be considered doubtful. The Community is (probably) represented in another early edict of a different and less technical name, 'parisa' (K. iii. 7 of Sénart).

jects. Of these treatises, not one bears exactly any name which is now in the Pitaka books; but the titles of particular books and passages have always varied, and there are texts to which the names used by Asoka may possibly refer—one in particular, the 'Instruction of Rahula,' is so identified.

There are few more interesting compositions in existence than these short proclamations. They reveal the personality of the writer; who takes his vast dominions, and—as it has turned out—the men of twenty centuries to come, into his confidence. He tells us the changes in his own attitude towards religion, and laments his former errors and want of zeal. There is egotism enough, but it is as much thankfulness as boasting.

Assuming, and it is a safe assumption, that the fourteen Rock Edicts were promulgated in the order in which we read them, and followed after a long interval by the Pillar Edicts, we find a well-marked progress in the king's ideas. This progress advances along Buddhist lines. The first point on which his conscience, to use modern language, seems to have been awakened, was that of 'taking life.' He laments the vast destruction of life—hundreds of thousands of animals a day—which used to take place for the royal table; and specifies with the utmost naïveté those which it is still usual to kill, two peacocks and one deer, but *the deer not always*, and promises that in future not even these shall be killed. Later on, he mentions with deep regret the multitudes of

men who had suffered in his wars, especially in a particular conquest; and among them he feels particularly for the religious ascetics, who, if not killed, have been distressed. And from his first conversion the king's kindness has led him not only not to kill, but to provide medicines both for men and for animals; and to have such trees planted, both in his own and in neighbouring countries, as are useful for medical purposes.

The great duty of alms-giving is also among the earliest insisted on, and comes out into more and more prominence,—alms-giving, especially to ascetics, to Brahmans and 'Samanas' (the two titles which latterly distinguished the Brahman and the Buddhist monk, but were at first used alike for any religious ascetic).

The other characteristic Buddhist virtues, pity, purity, truthfulness, and kindness in speech, are prominently insisted on, the emphasis laid on gentle speech being peculiarly in accord with Buddhist teaching as we read it in the sacred books.

In his admirable lessons on respect for parents, kindness towards slaves, and care for the religious interests of condemned criminals; and on the duty and advantage, not merely of tolerance, but of mutual respect, between differing religious sects, the royal teacher rises perhaps to a higher level than the Pitakas attain.

And he seldom speaks of alms without urging that the inner essence of conduct, kindness and

goodness, is worth more than alms; and that the best of all gifts is the gift of the true doctrine, the promotion of religion in those whom one would benefit.[1]

His one desire is for the good of his people, every one of whom he looks on as a son; that they may be as happy here as possible, and enjoy heaven hereafter. Good deeds ensure heaven; they not only bring the high satisfaction here of consciousness of virtue, but much more, they secure an infinite crop of merit. The infinite crop of merit ensuring heaven is the often-repeated expression for the *summum bonum.* There is nothing here of '*nirvana*,' but it is a perfectly just representation of one side of the earliest Buddhist teaching. Once more, the king's watchword is 'effort.' This word he repeats over and over again. He acknowledges the difficulty of a consistent religious life, but urges that it is worth the effort. He calls on his ministers and officials to do their utmost; it is only by exertion that these high fruits can be obtained. Men must strive and never give up. The one fatal obstacle to moral improvement is idleness and want of perseverance.[2]

All this, as it is read in the original, is even more strikingly Buddhist than it sounds in the English; for although most of the technical terms of the Pitakas are conspicuous by their absence, there is an agreement in phrase, and a use of favourite

[1] See *ante*, Chap. xi. p. 179.
[2] The absence of the *word* 'pamádo' is the more remarkable.

turns of expression, which keeps us very near to the language of the books. It is as clearly in sympathy with them as it is certainly not quoted from them. In short, the king's mind, if he was himself the author of these works, was becoming more and more imbued with a Buddhist spirit.

But meanwhile there is a whole region outside the limits and characteristics of Buddhism—a system of overseers of religion, higher and lower functionaries, appointed over provinces and districts, in the city and in the palace, to teach all classes, the king's wives and his sons in particular;—a system which seems to have been intended to be independent of the distinctions of creed or religion (as is, in fact, expressly stated in the eighth Pillar Edict), and to have aimed at promoting what the king continually calls that *essence* of religion which all sects[1] have in common. To promote good-will and justice, relieve the oppressed, distribute the royal bounties, these were the liberal aims with which this organisation, in which Piyadasi justly took delight and pride, was instituted. He boasts that he has sent his emissaries all over the world, into foreign countries as well as his own dominions; but it was to teach, not Buddhism nor any particular creed, but the *essential sound core* of personal goodness.

In this sketch we have been brought in contact

[1] The use of the word *pâsaṁda* for any sect or form of religion entirely without disparagement marks a point somewhat earlier than that of the fully formulated Buddhism. In the latter it implies 'heretical.'

with a well-marked personality; that of a man of the widest possible aims and the widest possible tolerance, yet one whose own mind has received its religious influences in a Buddhist form, from Buddhist sources. Of one thing only he is intolerant or somewhat contemptuous, of outward observances. He means probably Brahmanical ceremonies, for he alludes to such rites as were commonly practised in the several occasions of domestic life. They are of uncertain value at the best; in fact, virtually useless. And in one place—the only place where he definitely disparages any form of religion—he says he has made those that used to be the gods of India to be its gods no longer. M. Sénart thinks he means the Brahmans.

So far I have left out of sight the one edict, that of Bairat or Bhabra already alluded to, which is addressed directly to the Community of Magadha. In this the king appears very definitely as a disciple of the Buddha and a humble supporter of the Community.

The edict is thus translated by M. Sénart:

King Piyadasi salutes the Magadhan clergy[1] and wishes them prosperity and good health. You know, my lords, the extent of my respect and my zeal towards the Buddha, the Law, and the Clergy.[1] All that has been said by the blessed Buddha, it is all well said: and in so far as I can order anything, my lords, of my own will, I wish that this religious Law may be of long

[1] Or, as I should render it, 'Community.'

duration. Here are, for instance, my lords, some religious pieces: the *Vinayasamukasa* (Teaching of discipline); the *Ariyavasas* (supernatural powers (?) of the Aryas); the *Anágatabhayas* (dangers to come); the *Munigáthás* (the stanzas relating to the Muni or solitary religious); the *Upatisapasina* (the questions of Upatishya); the Moneyasúta (the sutra on Perfection); and the sermon to Ráhula uttered by the blessed Buddha, and beginning with falsehood. These religious pieces I desire the numerous confraternities of bhikkhus and bhikkhunis[1] to hear frequently and to meditate upon; likewise the lay devotees of both sexes. It is for this, my lords, that I have this engraven, that my will may be known.'

The peculiar tone of this one proclamation may be explained in either of two ways, or in both. It may be that the king used at the same time one tone towards the leaders of the religion to which he was personally attached, and another tone when he spoke as emperor to his subjects of every creed; one tone to the 'Community' of a small district which was entirely Buddhist, and another to the heterogeneous populations of a continent. The frame of mind supposed in this seems somewhat modern; but in a man of the singular greatness and genius of Asoka, it need not be held incredible. Or, on the other hand, it may be that this Bairat inscription belongs to the latest years of his reign; was issued on occasion of some particular event which had occurred in the

[1] *i.e.* monks and nuns.

Magadha community; and expressed a new and more definite enthusiasm on the king's part, consequent on a more definite knowledge. I think the latter explanation is the main one, but that the former is also true, and comes in to reinforce it.

The Sinhalese Chronicles, whose account of Asoka is found in the main so true, tell us that an assembly of the Community was held in Magadha in his reign, at which the canon of the sacred books was finally established. What we have been reading confirms this. Whether it was the whole canon that was then revised or not, everything conspires to convince us that about this time the Buddhist literature attained, or began to attain, a definite structure which it had not before. Asoka's general attitude in religious matters was certainly not as definitely or exclusively Buddhist as the Buddhist chronicles, not unnaturally, claim it to have been; nor does he display acquaintance with a Buddhism so fully formed as the chronicles would have it that it was; yet when we do find him on strictly Buddhist ground, in his own city and among his own monks, he uses very much the language which we should expect him to have used if Moggaliputta had just been holding the council in Patna. 'All that the Buddha has said is well said.'

Is it not possible, or highly probable, that some of his high officers of religion were leaders of the Buddhist Community, and Moggaliputta Tissa the chief of these; that among the missionaries of religion whom he boasts of having sent abroad, though all were

not Buddhist monks, some were; and that Mahinda, the missionary of Ceylon, was one of these?[1]

In spite of such a reconciliation, as I have shown can fairly be made between the Buddhism of Asoka and that of the Pitakas, the difficulty still will recur, that they are after all two different things. Some will still be tempted to say, as M. Sénart in fact says, that in Asoka's day there existed only a simpler system, the metaphysical Buddhism of the books being altogether of later date. But this will introduce greater difficulties.

We can pretty easily part company with the traditions which tell us that the system contained in the Pitakas was enunciated in its fulness by Gotama, or even, if need be, with that which says that these books were complete at the Council of Vesáli in 381 B.C.; but we cannot shake ourselves clear of the evidence that the contents and even the words of the Pitakas were known about Asoka's time.

The book called the 550 Jatakas, or, Stories of the Buddha's Previous Lives, is not considered one of the canonical books, but a commentary on one of them. The canonical book called 'Jataka' contains only certain stanzas, which for the moment I may call the 'morals' of the Jataka fables. It was, of course, compiled from those fables, and after them, and is only a witness on the point that the fables were

[1] The end of the Edicts of Sahasarám and Rupnáth, as now interpreted by M. Sénart, explicitly commemorates the mission of 256 such persons, and gives instructions for their conduct. But the interpretation is still *sub judice*.

early pressed into the service of Buddhism. We cannot infer from the Buddhist use of a Jataka story, that the Jataka book had been compiled; but we can infer, from great prominence being given in Buddhist quarters to stories which are in the Jataka book, that the materials of that book were collecting in Buddhist hands. Now among the carvings which adorn the stone rails around the great relic shrine of Bharhut (attributed to B.C. 240-210) are carved numerous illustrations of the Jataka stories; some of them are distinctly recognisable as the stories which we now find in the collection; some have the titles written upon them which they still bear.

If these stood alone, there would not be more than a moderate probability that they were chosen for that position because they held a place in the sacred literature; but this probability is greatly increased by their juxtaposition with what I have next to mention. Another scene on the same railings represents an event in the traditional history of the Buddha (see p. 61), the donation by the rich layman Anáthapindika of the park called Jetavana, to be a dwelling-place for Gotama and his train. The ground is covered, in accordance with the story, with coins; for it had been bought by the donor for as many gold 'kahápanas' as would cover it. And on the face of the tablet is carved the inscription, in almost the very words of the Maha Vagga: 'Anathapindika gives the Jetavana, having bought it for a layer of millions (of money).'

The relic-dome which these rails surround, and the railings themselves, are thought by General Cunningham to date from the latter part of the third century B.C., not more than twenty years after Asoka's later edicts. It is possible, but is not the opinion, I believe, of the learned, that the carvings are later than the dome.

But if these carvings are of the date assigned, the Buddhism of the books, whatever be said of the books themselves, must have been in full force. Beside these which I have mentioned, there are other scenes in the same series, representing events not contained in our Pitakas, but belonging to the later embellishment of them,—such as the descent of Gotama as a white elephant into his mother's body, and his journey to the Tusita heaven to preach to her. From these we should infer that the Buddhism, not of the edicts, but of the Pitakas, had been long established.

And there is another piece of evidence,—to my mind the most interesting, as it is certainly the most irrefragable, of all,—which establishes completely the claim of these Ceylon chroniclers, who tell us that *their* Buddhism was in full force in Asoka's day and was promoted by him, to be true witnesses about that period. We have already seen that, in the main points of their statement about Asoka—his conversion, his zeal, his missionary efforts—the Ceylon chroniclers are right. The minuteness of their knowledge of what Asoka did, in strictly Buddhist matters, is also indisputably proved. The king, says the chronicle,

sent out missionaries not to Ceylon only, but to many countries. Amongst them, 'he sent the elder, Majjhima, to the district of Himavanta.' Who would not have supposed that this was a detail for which the chronicler might have drawn on his imagination? But in the inmost recesses of the great relic-dome at Sanchi, a stone box was found by General Cunningham, on which was inscribed in 'Asoka' letters: '(relics) of Majjhima, teacher of the Himavat.' It is the nature of a relic-dome or 'dagaba' to be built solid over the relics which it encloses; not to be left open for them to be put in afterwards. If this is an unbroken rule, as I believe it is, the Mahavansa preserves the record of a minute fact, which was monumentally recorded at the date of the dagaba; *i.e.* according to General Cunningham, about 200 B.C., close about the very time when Majjhima, according to the Mahavansa, must have died. In short, we have contemporary evidence of the fact which the Mahavansa records.

In view of these things it seems impossible to doubt that the Sinhalese monks, from whose archives the Mahavansa was compiled, had preserved a true tradition about the character which belonged, in Asoka's days, to that stock of Buddhism which was brought over, in his days, to them.

It remains strange that the edicts of the father differ so widely from the text-books of the son, but there is hardly better ground for setting aside the one than for disputing the other.

At this point the writer may be forgiven for pausing and inviting his reader to reflect with him on the unique position occupied, in the history of human thought, by the imperial moralist. His was an enthusiasm such as was never reached by any Antonines. In him Buddhism inspired perhaps the greatest effort, in scale at any rate, on behalf of good, that was ever made by man, outside of Christianity. The rules and the books are insignificant in his presence.

Two hundred years at least had elapsed since the death of the founder, to whom the organisation of moral effort was attributed. A vast change had passed, since his day, over the face—the political aspect at least—of India. The touch of a strange new civilisation—the civilisation of their distant Aryan brethren of Europe—had been felt by the Aryans of the Ganges. Aided by the Greek invader, a single monarchy had asserted itself, and claimed all India for its own, and had so far succeeded as to give vividness to a new conception—that of a universal monarch. A great man had arisen, representative of that dynasty, who had assimilated much of the new civilisation and felt its stimulating influence. In his person the idea of the world-monarch was embodied. He was a man of vast ambitions and vast designs. And on this man, Piyadasi Asoka, at first a despot as careless as others of the means he used, the teaching of the ascetic community laid its spell. He became much more than its patron: he was

its apostle. As his reign went on he was more and more imbued with its spirit; the desire to serve it and extend it moulded his magnificent enterprise. He was not merely the Constantine of Buddhism; he was an Alexander with Buddhism for his Hellas; an unselfish Napoleon, with 'mettam' in the place of 'gloire.' The world was his that he might protect all lives in it; might teach loving-kindness throughout it; might establish in every part of it the Community of the disciples of the Buddha.

Compared with the solid reality of Asoka, the records which are preserved of the Buddha himself are but a shadowy tradition. And as the great King's history becomes better known, men will be tempted to speculate whether Buddhism owes more to Gotama than to Moggali;[1] to ask how far what is definite in the history of Bimbisára's days is a reflection thrown back on the mist of the past from the greater epoch of Asoka.

[1] The leader of the Community in Asoka's time.

CHAPTER XXI

CRITICAL HISTORY OF THE CANONICAL LITERATURE

THAT the contents of the Pitakas are not all of the date traditionally attributed to them, and—what is a different point—that they are not all of one date, will probably be admitted by every student, and, indeed, by every intelligent Buddhist. But it may be worth while to state clearly the proofs on which such a conclusion rests. The statement will probably show that the extent to which a variety of date must be admitted is very large indeed.

1. To take first what results from a general perusal of the canonical books. The Commentaries themselves admit, with regard to certain specified portions, that they were later additions; for instance, the Commentary on the Théragátha is quoted by Professor Morris as saying that parts of that book were first uttered at the Council of Patna.[1] The Dipavansa has been generally understood as saying[2] that the Kathávatthu of the Abhidhamma Pitaka was first uttered by the Moggaliputta at the same council; and although Pro-

[1] Professor Morris on Theragáthá, P.T.S., p. xi.

[2] Díp. vii. 55. The Subha S, was uttered by Ananda after the decease of the Buddha. See Dig. Nik. p. 204; Samanta Pásád. p. 286.

fessor Childers considered this interpretation to be a blunder, both Professor Oldenberg and the chief modern Sinhalese scholars uphold it; and there is nothing in itself improbable in the opinion that this is what the chronicler meant.

That many of the books were composed, not in the infancy of Buddhism, but when it had been a definite religion long enough for divisions and sects to have arisen, is abundantly evident. The 'degeneracy' of monks from the old standard is constantly deplored,—*e.g.* Saṁyut. bk. xvi. ch. xii. p. 224. Not only do the two last books of the Culla Vagga purport to contain the record of the Council of Vesali—said to have been held a hundred years after the decease of the Buddha to settle such disputes—but earlier parts of the Vinaya (see especially Maha Vagga, x.) were evidently written with a view to providing, or recording, a method of settling disputes, which is the very method resorted to in the Vesali case. Instructions are there represented as having been given by Gotama to each class—monks, nuns, lay devotees, etc. —how to behave in order to be sure of adhering to the orthodox party. In fact it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that this part of the Maha Vagga was written at the same time with and in closest reference to the later chapters of the Culla Vagga. The tenth book of the Maha Vagga is occupied with the record of a division in the Community, in which certain monks are guilty. The conduct prescribed is just that pursued by the orthodox in the Vesali

case—eighteen points (Vatthuni) are mentioned. At any rate, all these were written when there was a systematic method recognised of dealing with formulated heresies.

These, however, might possibly have been regarded as exceptional cases of later additions, were it not that references to disputes, heresies, and sects are found in almost every part of the Pitakas,—references less particular, but not less conclusive, for our purpose. We read of hostile monks as common, or likely to be common; of secessions to rival sects,[1] and of schisms. Whether 'nánásamvásaká,' literally 'living together in different groups,' should be translated by so strong a word as Professor Rhys Davids, 'of another communion,' I venture to doubt. But the allusions to sects and divisions are to be found everywhere, and not least in those books (as Maha Vagga) which have on other grounds the best claims to be thought old.

The concise list of rules called the Pátimokkha, and still used by the monks in their periodical chapters, is found imbedded (in the book called Vibhanga) among a number of more detailed rules, and is there explained, word for word, by a glossary. Now, if the view of Professors Rhys Davids and Oldenberg be accepted—and it is difficult to doubt it—that the Patimokkha, with its word-for-word glossary, is the original nucleus of the Vibhanga, and that around it in course of time the detailed illustrations grew up (the Mátikápadáni),—

[1] Maha Vagga, i. 32. 1; *ib.* viii. 30. 4.

then it follows that all this had taken place, and the history of it had been forgotten, and the original nucleus had been completely merged in the accretions, before the eleventh book of the Culla Vagga was composed; for in that chapter which purports to narrate how the sacred books were recited at the Council of Vesali, the recitation is represented as following not the older Patimokkha but the full Vibhanga.

References are not infrequent in one part of the Pitaka to the contents of another part: *e.g.* in the Kutadanta Sutta, it is said, 'here are to be embodied the contents of the Samannaphala Sutta;' a particular section of the Sutta Nipáta (Atthakatha) is referred to by name in Maha Vagga, v. 13. In Culla Vagga, i. 32, 2, we find enumerated the various similes which the Buddha has used for 'lust.' The stories of the Cariyá Pitaka even take for granted the Jataka commentary.[1] Sometimes one text expressly revokes another, as Maha Vagga, vi. 32, in reference to Maha Vagga, vi. 17, etc.

The books are represented as having become objects of study and research. Some Suttas, we read, are difficult and liable to be shirked by idle monks.[2] There is danger that a famous Sutta should be altogether lost, for want of some one to learn it by heart from those in whose memory it still survives.[3] A variety of alternative names is given—said to have been given by the Buddha, in answer to Ananda who

[1] See Dr. Morris's Pref. to C.P. [2] Sanyut. xx. 7. [3] Maha Vagga, iii. 5. 9.

asks its name—to one Sutta.[1] A certain verse is quoted and said to be old, but to be misunderstood by heretics.[2]

The passage above referred to (Sanyut. xx. 7) calls the old Suttas Tathágathabhásita, genuine utterances of Buddha, as distinguished from later additions. Angut. iv. 23 reviews all Gotama's speeches as true.

Besides the glossary on the Patimokkha in the Vibhanga, there are other comments inserted in the text in many places. A geographical note is inserted in the text in Maha Vagga, v. 13. 12, and a note on a name in Maha Vagga, viii. 1. 4. Search into Suttas to correct false opinions is prescribed in Angut. iv. 180, and the duty of learning and interpreting Suttas in Angut. 160, and not only learning but reading in Angut. iv. 97.

Further, the sum-total of the sayings of Buddha having been classified under nine heads—a process which one would not expect to find taking place until some time had elapsed—the nine kinds of text are many times enumerated,[3] while the less elaborate division—Dhamma, Vinaya, Matika—occurs constantly.[4] The ever-recurring phrase 'sattham savyanjanam' is usually rendered 'with text and comment,' and in any case implies a critical attitude towards the text, but it may have been in use in regard to Brahmanical texts, as it has not, like those above mentioned, any exclusive Buddhist application.

[1] Brahmaj. Sutta; Dig. Nik. i. [2] Maj. Nik. 75; and see p. 75.

[3] Maj. Nik. 22 (Alagadda Sutta) and Angut. iv. 6. 102. 186.

[4] Maha Vagga, x. 1—Maj. Nik. 33.

Of these indications of later strata of text one or another occurs in almost every part of the collection. One begins by saying to one's-self of one book and another, 'this is evidently late,' but one soon finds one's-self asking 'what is there left that can be old?'

An entirely distinct class of notes of age is found in the wide differences of grammatical form of diction and of metrical structure. Professor Fausböll and others have pointed out what are the older terminations; but I have not seen it shown in regard to any book that it is characterised by the presence of the older forms alone, or by their complete absence. A verse or a formula may be pronounced older or more recent on this ground; but I question whether the test can be successfully applied to any whole book or section of a book.

Among metres certain forms are, as I think I can show, generally associated with the older grammatical forms, and with the apparently older forms of narrative or dogma. The passages in which these metres are found may, perhaps, be pronounced to be the oldest portions; but I am not prepared to advance this as a matured conclusion.

2. One very important Sutta, to which frequent reference has been made, that which records the last doings and sayings of the Buddha and his final decease, the Maha Parinibbana Sutta (translated in the *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xi.), bears indications not only of a late date, but, as I think, of a particular date, that of the reign of Asoka. The grounds of this conviction I must try fully to explain.

The first point to be mentioned, interesting as it is, is not one on which I found much. The Sutta contains a supposed prophecy of Gotama's, to the effect that Patali, then an insignificant district or village (Pataligama), should become a great and important city (Pataliputta or Patna). To Buddhists, who believe in the Buddha's power to foretell the future, no argument can be founded on this. But all who are not Buddhists, and many who are, will agree that the passage was written after the city had become important; and that the only question is, At what time did this take place? There is a tradition of doubtful value,[1] that it became the royal residence somewhat before 381 B.C.; and the Sinhalese Chronicle tells us that about that date Asoka, the son of Susanága, reigned there.[2] Another tradition preserved by the Chinese pilgrim, Hiouen Thsang, says that it was the great Asoka who 'quitted Rajagaha, and fixed his court at Pataliputta.[3] However, while there remains this uncertainty, I can not absolutely claim the argument from this prophecy in support of any date later than 381 B.C. I will not, however, conceal my conviction that the earlier Asoka is a fictitious person; and that

[1] See Professor Rhys Davids' Introduction to the *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xi. p. xvi.

[2] Dípavansa, v. 25. But this is absent from Samanta Pásád (Old, p. 294-5), which emphasises, as Dípavansa does elsewhere, Dhammasoka's reigning at Pátaliputta.

[3] Quoted by Oldenberg, Introduction to Vinaya, p. 33. This cannot be true, as it is certain from the Greek historians that Candagutta was established at Palibothra.

the true founder of the greatness of the city was Asoka Piyadasi.

The Sutta opens by representing the king of Magadha as proposing to wage war against the Vajjians, and the Buddha as inquiring at great length into the degree of harmony which prevailed among the Vajjians, and saying that on their unity their prosperity depended. Now it was the Vajjians whose schism, according to the Culla Vagga, gave rise to the proceedings called the Council of Vesali.

It contains an account of the character of a Cakkavatti king or universal monarch, and of the way of burying one with ceremonies like those for a Buddha. Now Asoka Piyadasi was, as far as we know, the first, and certainly the first for several centuries, who answered to the description of a universal monarch. In him was embodied the Cakkavatti idea. In the days of the supposed Kalasoka, before the Greeks had erected the dynasty of Candagutta, the idea could hardly have been framed.

The Sutta orders the erection of dagabas or relic-shrines, a thing of which we hear nothing in the early books. This Asoka did: from his time, and from the succeeding century, date the majority of the great *dagabas* of India and of Ceylon. But what is particularly significant, it is stated in the Sutta that by the advice of Dona (see p. 85) these *dagabas* were to be erected, not in certain tribal provinces only, but in a great variety of places, so that the

religion might be propagated over all the world. This is utterly out of place in 381 B.C., but accords exactly with the proceedings of Piyadasi.

The Sutta says that the builders of Pataliputta named one of the gates Gotama's gate, and one of the ferries Gotama's ferry. Who is most likely to have given these names? Surely the great patron of Buddhism, the king who was converted to it—from which we may probably infer that his immediate predecessors were not Buddhists—and who turned all his energies to establish and glorify the religion?

From these considerations, I conclude that the Parinibbana Sutta was compiled at a time which later tradition claimed as the time of Kalasoka, and of the Vesali proceedings, but which there is very great reason to suspect was the time of Asoka Piyadasi.

If there is reason, on other grounds, to suspect Kalasoka of being fictitious, the probability of what I suggest is greatly increased.

But the Parinibbana Sutta does not stand alone. It is very closely allied to the Saṁyutta[1] and Anguttara[2] Nikayas, and to some of the more systematic Suttas of the other Nikayas. A very large part of the Pitakas must be brought down, as regards final compilation, to the date which is assigned to the Parinibbana Sutta.[3]

[1] *Cf.* Sanyut. xxi. 2, on wishing the Buddha to remain; *ib.* xx. 8, on the effeminacy of the Lichavis, etc.; xvi. 7, when in a comment on the common verse Candá dosá, etc., the words are used, 'háni yeva patikankhá no vuddhi.'

[2] Angut. iv. 23; *ib.* 130 (Cakkavatt), 158, 183, 187, etc.

[3] *e.g.* Samañ. Sutta, when the king is represented as having done exactly as Piyadasi did, tried other teachers, killed his brothers, etc.

And we have seen that tradition, according at least to Ceylon interpretation, does hint at some part at any rate of the latest Pitaka dating from Asoka's time.

The next step in the argument, which I borrow in the main from Professor Oldenberg, proves that the whole Abhidhamma Pitaka, as a collection, was later than Kalasoka and Vesali.

The Buddhist canonical books are grouped in three collections or Pitakas. The Collection of the Rule, or Vinaya Pitaka, the collection of Suttas, or Sutta Pitaka, and a third called Abhidhamma Pitaka. The three together are called the Tipitaka.

Now the word Tipitaka is not found in the Vinaya, nor, I believe, as far as is known, in either of the other collections. A ninefold classification, purporting to be exhaustive, of all the Buddha's teachings, does often occur. The Vinaya contains a record of two councils in which, especially in the first, the total and complete canon is said to have been defined; but neither here does the word Tipitaka, or even Pitaka itself, occur. It seems certain, therefore, that the arrangement in three Pitakas was a late arrangement.

A twofold grouping of the literature was inevitable from the first. The religious literature of every sect must have been more or less definitely divided into the two heads of rules and sermons; into rules of discipline, and discourses on good and evil, and the way of escape. It was hardly possible that the

teachings of Gotama should be collected at all without being distinguished into what would correspond substantially to a Vinaya Pitaka and a Sutta Pitaka. But there is no such natural place for a third, an Abhidhamma. This is of the nature of an addition. Its contents do not differ much from those of the Sutta Pitaka. The Vinaya and the Suttas must have existed before the Abhidhamma.

And there is abundant evidence that this was the case; abundant traces in the canonical books of a time when there were but two divisions of the literature. The one was always called Vinaya; but the other is called, within the sacred books themselves, not Sutta Pitaka, but Dhamma or Doctrine. The two words, Vinaya and Dhaṃma, or in one word, Dhammavinaya, occur very frequently. They mean sometimes doctrine and discipline, as when it is said, at the admission of a convert, 'one who was before a professor of another creed desires admission into this doctrine and discipline.' At other times they mean the books of doctrine and the books of discipline, as when it is recorded in the Culla Vagga that at the first council Upáli recited Vinaya, and Ananda recited Dhamma. That the Dhamma there said to have been recited was the collection of books now called the Sutta Pitaka is certain; for the five sections which form that Pitaka are expressly referred to, and the first Sutta of each is specified by name. And these two, Vinaya and Dhamma, it is stated, were the whole. At the time, there-

fore, when the last chapters of the Culla Vagga were written, there was a Vinaya Collection and a Sutta Collection, but there was not an Abhidhamma.[1] There were not three Pitakas; the literature, as we now have it, was not complete. (At the same time, it must be admitted that the whole completed canon was called Dhamma and Vinaya: *e.g.* in Samantapásádiká, we constantly find this expression side by side with Tipitakaṁ. See especially in the account of the Third Council, Samant. p. 312 *ad fin.*)

What date was this at which the Abhidhamma had not been added? It was certainly after what is called the Council of Vesali, B.C. 381: for it contains the record of that event.[2] That is the earliest possible date, but it is by no means the latest possible.

And when the statement of the books, that all was completed at the First Council, or at any rate at Vesali, is thus shown to be erroneous, we have no reason remaining for assigning to the completion any earlier date than on other grounds seems probable.

But to this it may be replied: Although the third Pitaka was added later, and although the covers of the Sutta Pitaka may for a long time have stood open to admit new compositions and compilations, or spoils

[1] The word 'Abhidhamma' occurs in the Vinaya and Suttas, but not as the name of a book or books.

[2] In the account of the Vesáli proceedings there is no mention of a revision of the whole (see below, p. 297), but the phrases Dhamma and Vinaya occur frequently, Abhidhamma never; nor in the learning ascribed to Revata in Chap. x.

adapted to Buddhist use from other literatures, yet we are bound to believe that the main body of the canon was completed, as tradition says all was, before the Council of Vesali.

Tradition tells us, I answer, with even greater minuteness and circumstantiality, that it was all completed at the Council of Rajagaha. It proves too much.

And tradition about Vesali is not all on one side; the oldest, if I mistake not, looks the other way.

At this point then I must invite the reader's attention to the subject of the so-called Three Councils; and I will begin by stating the conclusion to which I have come. I have arrived at it with reluctance, because in doing so I have had to part company, not only with Sinhalese tradition, but to some extent with Dr. Oldenberg. He holds that the Vesali proceedings did take place about 381 B.C., and that when they took place the Vinaya Pitaka at least was substantially complete. I cannot agree either that we know the date of these proceedings, or that we can infer from the record of them anything about the state of the literature at that date. If I am right in this latter position, the date matters little.

My conclusion is, that whatever Council was held in Asoka's time, it was the first Council of which we have any information; that the 'Council of Rajagaha' is entirely fictitious, and that the proceedings at Vesali were not a council.

We have two sources of information about the

earlier councils; first, the two last chapters of the Culla Vagga, which is the last section of the Vinaya Pitaka; and secondly, the Sinhalese tradition, as embodied in the Dipavansa and in Buddhaghosha's historical introduction to the commentary on the Vinaya. The well-known story of the three councils is derived from the latter source alone.

The first is recorded, though not under the title of a council (see below), not only in the Sinhalese tradition but in the Vinaya Pitaka itself, in the eleventh chapter of the Culla Vagga. It is there narrated with the utmost circumstantiality: the Sinhalese story is taken thence.

The reader will remember, perhaps, that at the time of the Buddha's final decease there was one disloyal voice raised, that of Subhadda, who said: 'We are well rid of him—now we can do as we like.' It was to meet this disloyal suggestion, says the eleventh chapter, that five hundred of the most eminent of his monks assembled at Rajagaha, with much pomp and circumstance, under the presidency of Kassapa, and the entire Vinaya was chanted through by Upali, and the Dhamma or Sutta Pitaka in like manner by Ananda. It was retained in memory with absolute exactness by the five hundred, and was never afterwards added to or altered, except by the addition of a few headings or divisions of sections.

The Sinhalese Dipavansa, our earliest authority after the canonical books, repeats this story briefly but without alteration. Buddhaghosha, however, perhaps

to correct what appeared to be an omission, adds, that in this place under the head of 'Khuddakanikáyo' is included *all the rest of the words of the Buddha.*[1] Elsewhere it includes only all the rest of the Sutta Pitaka. But there is not the slightest reason to think that the Ceylon tradition, or the similar account current among the Northern Buddhists, is independent of the account in the Culla Vagga. Over that account there hangs a grave suspicion. There are ten books of the Maha Vagga, twelve of the Culla Vagga. The last two are peculiar in character and contents. One of these relates the Council of Rajagaha, the other that of Vesali. The Council of Rajagaha, which is thus held to have settled the Buddhist canon, is never alluded to in any other part of these books. In those books there are many references to Buddha's words, to doubts about them, to Suttas being disused and forgotten, and so on; but not one reference, so far as is known, to the Council of Rajagaha. Further, the Parinibbana Sutta, which mentions what took place after the Buddha's death, and mentions that remark of Subhaddha, which is said to have suggested the council, makes no allusion to any council. Clearly, as Dr. Oldenberg says, 'the authors of the Parinibbana Sutta knew nothing of the First Council.'

That the council took place under the circumstances described is of course incredible, but from what has been said the reader will see, not only that it was not a fact, but that the tradition of it was a late tradition.

[1] Smanta-Pásádiká. Introduction, Oldenberg, p. 291.

The Second Council, according to the Dipavansa, took place at Vesali, exactly a hundred years after the Buddha's death. Certain Vajjian monks had promulgated heretical notions on ten extremely trifling points; points which bear, I think, the appearance of having been especially selected as trifling, to show how minute was the orthodoxy which they disturbed. Twelve thousand Vajjians, says the Dipavansa, assembled, and proclaimed at Vesali these ten points. To subdue these, twelve hundred thousand orthodox monks assembled. They crushed the heretics, and appointed seven hundred of their own number to hold a council. This was the second council. Meanwhile, the wicked Vajjians also met and held a schismatical council, which was called, from its being attended by ten thousand persons, the Great Council. At this many alterations were made in the original reduction of the Pitaka. They transposed Suttas, destroyed the meaning of both Pitakas, etc. : 'Rejecting single passages of the Suttas, and of the profound Vinaya, they composed other Suttas and another Vinaya which had (only) the appearance' (of the genuine one). Then follow the details of certain changes which they made.

Such is the Dipavansa account of the Vesali Council; but it differs very widely from that in the Culla Vagga. The Culla Vagga knows of no great assemblies, either of heretics or orthodox. The ten points are the same, but the method of dealing with the difficulty is altogether different.

The points at issue were discussed at first among

individuals, and the description of this is most life-like and probable; till, as we read (xii. 2, 7), 'The Community met together with the intention of inquiring into this legal question.' The Community here is not a general convention of the whole body of monks, but the local Community. Having met together, it proceeded to follow (as Professor Rhys Davids has pointed out) the rules laid down in Culla Vagga, iv. 20, for the appointment of a committee, and by that committee the matter was decided.

These proceedings were not only not a council like that at Rajagaha, or like that which we may suppose to have been attributed to Asoka, but they obviously did not constitute a council at all. It was an application of the ordinary rules of business to a local dispute.

Nor is there any indication in the body of the chapter (Culla Vagga, xii.) in which all this is recorded, that it was regarded as an occasion parallel in dignity to that ascribed to Rajagaha. There is no hint in the body of the chapter that the Vinaya was recited at all.

At the end of the chapter occurs the sentence—quite out of keeping with what has preceded—'Whereas at this rehearsal of the Vinaya seven hundred Bhikkus, without one more, without one being wanting, took part, therefore is that rehearsal of the Vinaya called that of the seven hundred.' This is an exact repetition of the last sentence of the previous chapter, which says the same—only with five hundred instead of seven hundred—of the rehearsal at Rajagaha. It is impos-

sible to repress the suspicion that this sentence was a very much later addition, added to the chapter after the idea of a series of councils had arisen, to bring the Vesali proceedings into line with the Council of Rajagaha.

Now in this collision of authorities, in which the Dipavansa, compiled in Ceylon in the fourth century A.D., is in conflict with the canonical book, the former has no weight; and the earlier authority, except in the closing sentence, on which I have just commented, does not allude to any sort of recension of the canon. In short, as Dr. Oldenberg says, 'the tradition of the Second Council in its authentic form, does not bring this council into any authentic relation with the sacred books.'

Dr. Oldenberg adds, that the tradition 'is historical.' To what extent? Not as a history of a council; that it is not, but as the history of certain special and local proceedings.

It is very gratifying to me to find that my view of these matters does not, so far, differ widely from that expressed by Professor Max Müller, in his valuable Preface to volume x. of *Sacred Books of the East*, a preface which, I am rather ashamed to confess, I had not studied when I wrote this chapter. He ends with the words: 'To my mind all dates beyond Candragupta are purely tentative, resting far more on a chronological theory than on actual tradition; and though I do not doubt the historical character of the Council of Vaisali, I look upon the

date assigned to it, on the authority of the Dipavansa and Mahavansa, as, for the present, hypothetical only.'

We have not arrived yet at any intimation of a date by which the books had been compiled, nor have we come across a council.[1]

From what has been alleged, the conclusion seems to follow that the whole idea of a series of councils was late. That idea was not, perhaps, even in the Sinhalese Chronicles, used exactly with the meaning which the word is liable, from association of the word with the councils of Christendom, to call up in European minds. But the belief that there had been a series of recensions did certainly arise. To which facts was it due?

Certainly not to a Council of Rajagaha having been succeeded by a Council of Vesali. No historian believes in the first; and the second was not a council. Professor Oldenberg believes that the account of the Vesali proceedings is substantially historical; and that the Rajagaha assembly is a fictitious double of it. But how should the idea of a *series of sangitis* arise out of one event to which that title hardly applies? What was the genuine fact of which these are the reflection?

1 Even in the concluding sentence no word is used which necessarily means a council. The word Sangíti, popularly rendered council, bearing that meaning at a later date (Dhátusena made a Pitaka Sangiti *Mahavansa*), meant only, in the days of the Pitaka compilation, what Rhys Davids cautiously renders it, a 'rehearsal.' It means, properly, chanting together, as he renders it in the account of the Rájagaha assembly. In the Maha Vagga, iv. 15. 3, Vinaya Sangíti is used, not of any council, but of an annual recitation; in Culla Vagga, x. 17, it seems to mean the formula recited.

The answer is, The council held in Asoka's days, and commonly called the Council of Patna.

The Sinhalese traditions, on which the chroniclers and Buddhaghosha drew, utterly untrustworthy as they are in regard to events of the fourth or fifth century B.C., had certainly good information in regard to Asoka. Their statements about him are borne out by his own inscriptions, and by the relic-box of Majjhima, to an extent which leaves no doubt of their veracity. It is therefore incredible that they should not have known whether there was held in his time a council for the recension of the sacred books or not. They say there was. There is nothing to account for their saying so except the fact.

The Dipavansa account of this 'Third' Council is as follows:

'In order to destroy the infidels, many disciples of Buddha, sixty thousand sons of the Jina, assembled. At that convocation, the son of Moggali (Moggali-putta) was the president. The presiding Thera, in order to purify his own doctrine, and to establish the faith for a long time, selected one thousand Arahats, choosing the best ones, and held a council. In the monastery of the Asokárâma, which had been built by king Dhammasoka, the third convocation was finished in the space of nine months.'[1]

It is not mentioned in his Edicts. The last one is addressed, it is true, to the Community of

[1] Dípavansa, vii. 50, 51, 57, 58, translated by Dr. Oldenberg.

Magadha.[1] But that expression means the local Community. It says nothing whatever about their being assembled. But his addressing them as a body is obviously compatible, and something more than compatible, with their being assembled on some special occasion.

But there are grounds much safer than this for inferring from the Edicts that something like a recension of the sacred books took place.

In the earlier Edicts, although the king appears as the advocate of Buddhist principles, the technicalities, the books, the names of Buddhism are conspicuous by their absence. But as his reign goes on the definiteness of his Buddhism increases, till in the latest Edicts he uses technical language, specifies particular books or discourses, and says—in words which might be taken from the Anguttara Nikáya—that all that was said by the Buddha was well said.

Does not this agree with the intimation, which reaches us from other sources, that during his reign something was done towards the arrangement and formulation of the Buddhist literature? That it existed in its completeness at any time during his reign, I find it difficult to believe. Professor Sénart, who has studied his Edicts so closely, declares that he cannot have known the Tipitaka. Strange indeed

1 Professor Sénart suggests that by 'Magadha Community' the king meant the Buddhist Community in general. His reason for the suggestion is, the improbability of the king's publishing in the far North-west a letter to the local community of Bihar. But the meaning thus assigned to the words seems even more improbable.

would it be, if he did know it, that he should not have named it.

In Asoka's day, then, as I conclude, the mass of the Buddhist literature began to be arranged. Possibly within his reign this was accomplished. The addition of the Abhidhamma may have been definitely made within the lifetime of Moggaliputta. Possibly Mahinda carried over our present Three Pitakas to Ceylon (see note at end of this chapter), or it may have been still many years before the process was completed. But that it was completed before Asoka's reign, or before India had felt that Græco-Buddhist impulse, of which Asoka is the impersonation—this will not long be believed.[1]

For the Ceylon Chronicles I have much respect, but I cannot trust them for the time before Buddhism was introduced. There was no one, by their own showing, likely to have kept records before that date.

From the time of Mahinda's arrival the monks of Anuradhapura kept, I suppose, pretty continuous records; and Mahinda had brought them genuine traditions of the Buddha's time, and some recollections of recent events in India. All about Asoka, and a little about his father, and that his dynasty began with his grandfather—this they knew,—it belonged to the surroundings of the centre and source of their enlightenment. It is no blame to the Ceylon authorities that they 'could not remember before they were born.' From the time when

[1] See the Note on p. 307.

Buddhism was introduced into the island, they evidently kept records of considerable merit; but for what they tell us of earlier times they must have drawn on imagination. To this source I attribute the lists of kings between Ajátasattu and Candagutta, and the list of elders between Kassapa and Moggali. These are very circumstantial, but certainly inconsistent with one another; they have, I think, no ascertainable value.

And if it be asked, May not Mahinda have brought over correct records of the past history of Buddhism in India? I reply, first, that there is no evidence that he did; and, secondly, that it is extremely improbable that records of Buddhism as a whole were kept in the early days of Buddhism. We do not find in the sacred books much indication of a centralised system; the idea of a single centre was the growth of later times, called out by divisions, and the necessity of meeting them.

Nor was there in India, apart from Buddhism, the habit of keeping such records. The means, indeed, for doing so were wanting. Only events, such as could be commemorated in verse, could be handed down before writing was known. The names of kings and the length of the reign of each are not of this nature. A memorial verse filled with the names of kings could not be made, since there would not be names enough to make a verse, till four or five kings had died; by which time the regnal years, if not the name, of the first of them must have been forgotten.

Further, the complete break of dynasty and of constitution which occurred when Candagutta was raised to power would almost certainly have destroyed all continuity of public records.

All these considerations, I think, justify us in disregarding, however circumstantial they may be, the chronological and historical assertions of Dipavansa, as to the fourth and fifth centuries B.C.

If this be the case, there is no reason to believe that the Vesali proceedings took place anything like as early as 381 B.C. Internal evidence would point to a date very close to that at which the record was compiled. The narrative of the proceedings in Culla Vagga, chapter xii., is circumstantial and life-like. The other books of the Culla Vagga, giving directions for such proceedings, are entirely of a piece with the narrative; they cannot have been constructed at widely different dates. In fact, the shortest interval which will allow of their date having been forgotten, and of their being treated as matters of the past, is the interval which suits best with the facts.

As soon as the canon had been formulated and the orthodox system clearly defined as against all others, it was perfectly natural that efforts should immediately be made to publish over the world this 'Doctrine of the Elders' (Theraváda); and this is exactly the connection in which the Dipavansa puts the two things. 'The presiding Thera (Moggaliputta), in order to purify his own doctrine and to

establish the Faith for a long time, selected one thousand Arahats, choosing the best ones, and held a Council. In the monastery of the Asokārāma, which had been built by King Dhāmmasoka, this third convocation was finished in the space of nine months.

'Here ends the Council of the True Faith, which lasted nine months.

'Far-seeing Moggaliputta, who perceived by his supernatural vision the propagation of the Faith in the future in the neighbouring countries, sent Majjhantika and other Theras, each with four companions, for the sake of establishing the Faith in foreign countries, and for the enlightenment of men. Preach ye together with your brethren powerfully the most excellent religion to the foreign countries, out of compassion for created beings.'

And among the details of this mission are the following :—

'The wise Thera called Yonakadhamma-rakkhita [1] converted the Aparantaka country by preaching the Aggikkhandopama Sutta. . . . The Thera who originated from the Kassapa tribe, Majjhima, Durabhisāra, Sahadeva, Mūlakadeva, converted the multitude of Yakkhas in the Himavat. . . . Mahinda, going with four companions to the most excellent island of Lanka,

[1] *Yonaka dhammarakkhita.* Either 'Greek,' or 'sent to the Greeks.' Probably the former. This is the earliest reference I have noticed (but I cannot say that it is the earliest) to the Greeks. If there is no allusion in any of the earlier books to the Greeks, who are so frequently referred to in the later history, this is a very strong confirmation of the view above expressed as to the date of the compilation.

firmly established there the Faith and released many people from their fetters.'[1]

In thus bringing down to the latter part of the third century B.C. the date of the compilation and arrangement of the Buddhist books, which had been growing and accumulating for two centuries, I have no fear that I am over-sceptical. If I have a misgiving—and one does sometimes come across me—it is lest I have relied too much on the Sinhalese Chronicles in the matter of Asoka and Mahinda. But this misgiving is quieted whenever I recall those Bharhut sculptures with titles quoting the Pitaka, that box with Majjhima's name on it, and the language of the Edict of Bairat.

Note on the Pitakas and the Ruwanweli Dagaba.

An interesting commentary on the biography of the Buddha is found in Mahavansa (chapter xxx.), where a list is given of the sculptures with which a great king of Ceylon, Dutthagamini, adorned the Ruwanweli Dagaba about B.C. 161. They include: The events near the Bo-tree (in seven times seven, not four times seven days); the request of Brahma; the Setting in motion of the Wheel, etc.; the Ordination of Yasa; the Bhaddavaggiya Princes; Conversion of Jatilas; Visit of Bimbisára; Entrance to Rajagaha; Acceptance of Bamboo Park; the Eighty Disciples; Journey to Kapilavatthu, and Golden Ambulatory; Admission of Rahula and Nanda; Acceptance of Jetavana. So far all are almost exactly in accord with the Vinaya.

Then follow a number of events either not in the Pitakas or under different titles:—

[1] Dipavansa, viii. 1-3, 7, 10, 13.

Miracle at gates of Savatthi; Sermon to Mother in Tavatimsa; Miracle to Devas after it (after Abhidhamma); Interrogation of Elders on return from Tavatimsa; Delivery of the Mahasamaya Sutta; Delivery of the Rahulovada Sutta; Delivery of the Mahamayala Sutta; Attack by Dhammasála at the instigation of Devadatta; Discourse to Alavaka; Discourse to Angulimála; Discourse to Apalála; Discourse to Páráyana Brahmans.

The journey to the Tavatimsa heaven accounts for four of these, seven are discourses, and one belongs to the Vinaya (Culla Vagga) account of Devadatta.

From this point the tradition of the Parinibb. Sutta is strictly followed.

The Determination to decease in three months; Cunda's Offering; the Gift of Pukkusa; the Drinking of the Kakuttha Water; the Parinibbana; Lamentation of Devas; Homage of Maha Kassapa; Self-ignition of Pyre; Division of relics by Dona.

This list of sculptures represent almost exactly the biography contained in the Pitakas, as we have displayed it in Chapter iv. All the scenes may be derived from the first book of the Maha Vagga, and from the Parinibb. Sutta, except such as describe the delivery of various Suttas, and one important group, that of the scenes connected with the visit to the Tavatimsa heaven.

It is evident that this passage, if it can be relied on, shows that Dutthagamini possessed substantially our present Pitakas. Can it be relied on? In other words, is this list of sculptures drawn by the chronicler from what he saw on the Ruwanweli Dagaba, or from his books? Does the list date from 160 B.C., or 400 A.D.?

It is possible, in spite of the earlier Tamil invaders, who are not said to have defaced the dagaba as later ones did, and in spite of the new works which Vattagamini (Mahavansa, xxiv.) added, that all or nearly all of Dutthagámini's work existed when Mahanama wrote. On the other hand, it is certain that much of the chronicler's account of Dutthagámini's construction of the dagaba is mere romance, or improbable tradition. From the supernatural bricklayers, the slowest of whom could build in a day as much as a hundred carts could bring, to the eighty-four thousand priests who were present at the dedication, the whole story is embellished with the exaggerations of fancy. But that would not necessarily discredit either the central facts, or even details in the description of that which was within the chronicler's own knowledge. When, however, we come

to the relic-case, composed of six slabs of alabaster, each eighty cubits long and broad, by eight inches thick, which according to the chronicler was, and, if he is right, is now inside the dagaba, we find that he cannot have been seriously attempting to picture to himself what he described. He cannot have seen it. He is describing an imaginary dagaba, not the real one. For apart from the absurdity of the slabs of alabaster of the proportion of sheets of cardboard, the Ruwanweli Dagaba, as Mahanama saw it, would scarcely hold such a box. It is said, however (Mahavansa, xxxiv), that king Vattagamini was mysteriously conducted into this wonderful relic-box, in which he had heard beatified beings chanting.

Our chronicler, it is certain, consulted rather his imagination than his eyes in this part of the description.

I dare not, therefore, draw from the thirtieth chapter of the Mahavansa any confirmation of the opinion that our Pitaka was known to Dutthagámini, or that Mahinda taught it in Ceylon.

PART III

BUDDHISM IN CEYLON

CHAPTER XXII

MAHINDA AND THE CONVERSION OF CEYLON

OUR history is now to cross from India to Ceylon, and to trace the fortunes of Buddhism in the island, after its establishment there by Mahinda in the third century. But first we may not entirely pass over the account which is given—though of course fictitious, and I believe late—of the preparations made for this in Buddha's own time. The historians of Ceylon, whether the authors of the primitive monastery archives, or the original compilers of the Dipavansa and Mahavansa, or their later continuators, desired not unnaturally to represent the Buddha as having visited their island. They have not for that purpose either contradicted or interpolated the sacred text. They have found, within the statements of the Tipitaka, opportunities recorded, which the Buddha used (as they say, and as the sacred text does not deny) for visits to Lanka.

The Maha Vagga records among the marvels which preceded the conversion of Kassapa the Jatila, that the Buddha, aware of Kassapa's jealousy of his

influence, made a point of withdrawing on the day of Kassapa's festival. He obtained his meal that day from Uttarakuru, and withdrew to eat it to the mystic lake Anotatta in the Himalaya. This was of course completed before midday. The Vinaya says that he rested by the lake in the heat of the day; but it does not mention how he spent the latter part of the afternoon. He returned, we read, before night. The gap is supplied by the Mahavansa. 'On that very afternoon, being the ninth month of his Buddhahood, at the full moon of the constellation "Phussa" unattended (he) "visited Lanka" for the purpose of sanctifying Lanka.'[1]

The purpose of this visit was to clear the island of the yakkhas (demons; wood, forest, or savage beings), who were not likely to make good followers of the Buddha. Taking advantage of one of their assemblies, when they were gathered together in a beautiful garden in the centre of the island, the Buddha appeared unexpectedly in the air above them; terrified them by storms and rain, and cold and darkness, till they offered to him the whole island. He dispelled their terrors and seated himself on the earth among them, but soon caused flames to extend in every direction from the carpet on which he sat, till the yakkhas were driven to the shores. He then caused a delightful island called Giri, quite as attractive as Lanka, and prepared in every way for their reception, to approach alongside: the yakkhas stepped on to it,

[1] The tradition, as given in this place (Mahávansa), as to the events that followed immediately on the attainment of Buddhahood follows, with one slight difference, that in the Vinaya. See p. 37 *supra*.

and it returned to its former place in the ocean. Thus, without difficulty or discontent, the undesirable population was disposed of.

The island of Lanka was now occupied by local deities in inconceivable numbers, and these were soon converted. The chief of the local deities or devas, Sumana of Sumanakúta (Adam's Peak, now, but then Sumana's Peak), begged for something worthy of worship, and the Buddha gave him a handful of his pure blue (hyacinthine?) locks, which the deva enshrined in an emerald casket. After the Nirvana of the Buddha—as the Mahavansa tells us, with less regard for the Mahaparinibbána Sutta—the thorax-bone was brought from the pyre by an elder named Sarabhu, and deposited in the same dagaba[1] of emerald, which was enclosed in a larger one of marble. Later kings enlarged this further; and this is the history of the celebrated Mahiyangana Dagaba.[2]

To bring the Buddha to Lanka during the early months of his Buddhahood, for which the Vinaya record is so detailed, was a feat of some ingenuity. None was shown in saying that in the fifth year, while staying in Jetavana, he paid a second visit.

[1] This word, from 'dá, dhátu' 'relic,' and 'gaba, garbhaya' 'womb, receptacle,' is generally used of large buildings, but may be strictly used, as here, of a small casket, now called 'Karanduwa.' The shape is the same in small and great.

[2] At Alut Nuwara, in eastern Bintenne, the low ground on the east of the central mountains. This place, on the banks of the Mahaveliganga, is now a very obscure spot. It is, however, as nearly as possible the 'centre' of the island. As late as the middle of the eighteenth century the Kandian king is said to have visited and admired it (Maha Vagga, 99); and it was visited by Siamese pilgrims (*ib. c.* 100.)

At this time the island seems to have been occupied by Nagas (supernatural beings, men connected with serpents and serpent-worship, wild tribes of non-Aryans), and a great quarrel was going on among them. The Buddha pacified it by means not unlike those used at the former visit, and then preached and converted many myriads of the Nagas. The geographical references in this story are the vaguest possible with one exception, which is probably the motive of the story. One of the Naga kings, so converted, was the king of Kalyáni (Kelani near Colombo) and to him the Buddha promised a visit.

Accordingly, in the eighth year of Buddhahood the Buddha's third visit to Lanka took place, and several great centres of his worship were established. The Naga king entertained him at Kelani; he then went to Adam's Peak and impressed his footprint in it; going thence he spent some time in meditation at Dighavapi, in the east of the island, and afterwards at Anuradhapura (Meghavana) on the spots afterwards occupied by the Bo-tree, the Thuparama, and the Sila Dagaba, respectively. All these visits are referred to in the fifteenth chapter.

The Mahavansa has nothing further to say of the fortunes of Buddhism in Ceylon, until the days of Asoka. In fact, in the chapters (vi.-x.) which narrate the supposed arrival of Vijayo, who is said to have been the son of a lion, his reception by a kind of Circe, and the mere jumble of fairy tales which take the place of a chronicle up to about B.C. 250,

one thing is clear, that the original compiler of these chapters—*i.e.* of all that precedes in Sinhalese history, the date of Asoka—represents the religion of the island in those days as Brahman.[1] We read of 'Paribbájakas,' and 'Niganthas,' etc., and various Brahman rites, but of no Buddhist shrines, monks, or believers. Nor is Mahinda reported to have found, when he came to Lanka, any traces of the Buddha's visit.

These romantic and inconsistent narratives of the preparation for Mahinda's visit being disposed of,[2] we come to that visit itself.

Here, I believe, we are on historical ground.

It has been shown that the Pali chronicles, by their specification as the missionary of Asoka to the Himavanta country, of the very Majjhima whose name is recorded as 'Himavanta-teacher' in a monument of a date not much later than Asoka, have amply established their claim to be trusted in regard to the history of that time. There are very serious difficulties in the way of giving them the benefit of these credentials in regard to the times before Asoka, because for the earlier centuries the monuments are as much against them as from Asoka onwards they are in their favour. But it is clear that the author of the Mahavansa had access to good sources of tradition or

[1] It is no exception to this that we find on the occasion of the landing of Vijayo, the Buddha, in Nirvána, commending him and Lanka to Sakka's protection.

[2] The preface about Vijayo, etc., is not referred to again in the original portion of the Mahavansa.

testimony about the missions which Piyadasi set on foot. We cannot, therefore, easily set aside his statement that Asoka's son Mahinda came as the preacher of Buddhism to Ceylon. The writer, who knew that Majjhima went to Himavanta, is likely to have known whether Mahinda came to Ceylon; especially when he writes in Ceylon, and with a view to the history of Ceylon. Indeed he records the other earlier matters only because they bear upon the history of Ceylon. The Dipavansa says: 'Mahinda going with four companions to the most excellent island of Lanka, firmly established (there) the faith, and released many people from their fetters,'[1] and goes on to give an elaborate, and of course imaginative and highly embellished, account of the journey of Mahinda, his arrival at Anuradhapura, the royal city, his reception there by the king, Devanampiyatissa, and the establishment of Buddhism in the island.

The king of Lanka was then the great Tissa. Various wonders attended his birth. He was a great friend of Asoka; and of the wonderful treasures which his kingdom produced, no one, he said, 'but my friend Dhammasoka is worthy.' He sent, therefore, 'gems pearls, and a left-handed chank or shell, and three mystic chariot-poles, by ambassadors to Asoka at Pataliputta. Asoka received them graciously, and conferred high office on the ambassadors. To Tissa he sent back a great variety of precious gifts, but, in particular, all the things necessary for anointing

[1] Dip. viii. 13.

and inaugurating a king. He sent also, to his ally, this 'advice:' 'I have taken refuge in Buddha, and thou also do the same.' And he gave the ambassadors instruction to anoint Tissa—though he was already king—a second time.

This, in its admirable naïveté, agrees accurately with what we learn from Asoka's inscriptions. That monarch claims to be supreme over Tambapanni (Ceylon, Taprobane), and to have sent to establish Buddhism in all his dominions. The Ceylon chronicle gives the Ceylon version of the relation between the two kings.

It was just at this time that the great Council of Pataliputta was held, and when it was over, the wise Moggali, who had presided at it, sent out into many lands the missionaries of Buddhism. The chronicles record in spite of what obstacles, and by the use of what Suttas, the religion was established in each.[1] The conversion of Lanka was assigned by Moggali to Mahinda.

Now, Mahinda, son of Asoka, was born while his father was as yet a viceroy under his father Bindusára, in Ujjeni, or Ujain, in Avanti, a province in Central India; and his mother Devi still lived at Vedisa in that province; and it was from Vedisa, during a visit to her, and not directly from Patna, that Mahinda, when the destined moment arrived, miraculously took his flight to Ceylon. The moment was that of Tissa's second

[1] And incidentally shows perhaps what Suttas were held in chief esteem in Ceylon before A.D. 400.

coronation, and when he was prepared, in consequence of Asoka's message, to welcome Buddhism.

King Tissa had set out on an elk-hunt with a retinue of 40,000 men; and in pursuit of an elk, which was really a deity in disguise, he was led to the place where Mahinda and his companions were. He was delighted at the sight of the yellow robes, and was soon converted to their faith. But not till his intelligence had been tested by a puzzle with which the readers of Buddhist books are now familiar enough. 'What is this tree called?' asked the Elder. 'A mango,' replied the king. 'Besides this one, are there any other mango trees?' 'There are many.' 'Besides this mango and those other mangoes, are there any other trees in the world?' 'Yes, sir, there are many trees, but they are not mangoes.' 'Besides the other mango-trees and the trees that are not mangoes, is there any other?' 'Yes, sir, this mango.' 'Well done,' cried the Elder, 'thou art wise.' When the king had been proved by this, and another puzzle very like it, to be capable of understanding, the Cúlahatthipádopama Sutta was preached to him, and thereupon he and his 40,000 followers (one is rather disappointed to find them all standing by) attained deliverance.[1]

When Tissa discovered that the Elder was the son of his old friend and ally, he was the more delighted.

The occasion was marked of course by innumerable wonders: innumerable devas, nagas, and winged serpents were converted. The princess Anulá, sister-

[1] A translation of this momentous discourse is appended to this chapter.

in-law of the king, with five hundred women, drew near, and they also entered on the first stage. And by the preaching of Devadúta Sutta a thousand of the common people were converted. The ladies next day attained the next stage, and wished to be 'ordained,' but Mahinda said it was not lawful for him to ordain them; his sister Sanghamitta must be sent for.[1]

The description of the great number of elaborate buildings which were erected in places rendered sacred by some act of Mahinda, in what is now the district of Anuradhapura and Mihintale, occupies a large space in the Mahavansa. It is natural that this should be so, for the Mahavansa (in its original form) is essentially the history of the Great Vihara, as Anuradhapura was formerly called. The name Anuradhapura does not occur in the account of Mahinda's settlement.

But the central act of the whole series of dedications was the donation to the Community of the Mahamegha Park, in exact imitation of the donation of the Veluvana by Bimbisara to the Buddha himself (chap. xv.). This gift, marking the 'establishment' under royal protection of Buddhism in Ceylon, as it had been established in Magadha by Bimbisara, was signalised by several earthquakes. All the previous Buddhas of this cycle (or kalpa) had visited and sanctified that spot, under different names. On it were soon to stand the Bo-tree, the Brazen Palace, and innumerable sacred places, and hereafter, in Dutthagámini's time, the Ruwanweli Dagaba.

[1] In regard to nuns, etc., see *ante*, Chap. xix. p. 249.

Such was Tissa's first great work, the Mahavihara of Anuradhapura. He was next led to the hill, Missa, where Mahinda had first appeared to him, and there began the construction of sixty-eight rock-dwellings, which constituted the Vihara of the Shrine Hill, long afterwards named Mihintale.

The third in order of his foundations was the Thupáráma Dagaba. This was the first dagaba erected, as tradition goes, in Ceylon; and that which now bears its name, and which doubtless stands on the spot where the original one stood, has good claims to be considered the oldest building in Ceylon. It may, very probably, be in part the actual original. It had the appearance, a few years ago, of a truly venerable building, but has of late been made ridiculous with the stucco and whitewash of the Buddhist revival. It is, like all Ceylon dagabas, a solid mass of brick, of the shape of a bell, placed on a square base, and surmounted by a circular tower. But before it could be erected, a relic must be obtained to be enclosed in it, and this was accomplished by the boldest supernatural means. Not only did messengers go through the air to Asoka's court to obtain such relics as the great monarch could bestow, but they were commissioned to go further—to Sakka, the prince of the (lower) gods, and demand of him the right collar-bone of the Buddha. All this was

[1] For there were no relics of the Buddha yet in Lanka. This obviously true statement is contradicted by the story in chap. i. of Sárabhu depositing the 'gívaṭṭhi' in the Mahiyangana Dágaba.

duly executed, and, after many more marvels, the right collar-bone, with a terrific earthquake, took its place under the Thupáráma Dagaba.

The next step was the obtaining of the Bodhi-tree branch. The king's nephew and minister, Arittha, was deputed to ask for two things,—that Sanghamitta, King Asoka's daughter, should come and initiate the ladies of Lanka, and that she should bring with her the right branch of the great Bo-tree. The princess was immediately ready to obey the summons of her brother Mahinda, but as to the sacred tree, King Asoka was in doubt ; it would be profane to cut it. But he was informed that the Buddha, when on the very point of his final decease, had (though the Mahaparinibbána Sutta has omitted to mention it) resolved, amongst other resolves affecting Lanka, that this branch should sever itself from the tree and deposit itself in the vase prepared for it. His anxiety was dispelled, and the goldsmith of the gods, Vissakamma, having made a vase of gold of gigantic size, the branch (to make a long story short) planted itself therein, and was conveyed, amid various miraculous circumstances, to Ceylon. Oriental embellishments are here accumulated to a pitch of exaggeration which is repulsive to an English reader. The effulgences, the flowers, the divine music, and the rest display no new invention, but they show how immense has been the significance of this Bo-tree branch to the Buddhists of Ceylon. According to the principle of criticism by which I am guided, the wreaths of flowery fiction in which this

central tradition is almost buried, do not in any degree discredit the central tradition itself; and I am quite prepared, for my part, to believe that the Bo-tree which stands at Anuradhapura derives its life, without the intervention of any new seed, from the root of the Bo-tree which Asoka was instructed to worship. But for the accuracy of the identification of that tree with the tree under which Gotama the Sakyan was resting when he first felt himself to have attained the truth,—for this there is no shadow of security. For there is not a hint in all the earlier literature, so far as I have seen it, that any note was taken in the earlier centuries of this particular tree.[1]

Such is the received tradition of the mission of Mahinda, and of the foundation of the Anuradhapura shrines. It was at this Anuradhapura that the chronicle was undoubtedly composed; and its materials were derived—as the author states in his preface—from materials found in the monasteries there.[2] In a suburb of that city, at what is now called Mihintale, the 'Elder' (as Mahinda was called *par excellence*), was established with a handsome monastic establishment: there he died.[3] The chronicler was therefore in a perfectly good position for knowing all that was to be known about Mahinda,

[1] It is conspicuous by its absence from Parinibb. Sutta, vol. xvii.; *Sacred Books of the East*, xi. p. 90.

[2] On the details, see Oldenberg, Dip., Preface.

[3] But it is not certain that the chief ceremonies in his honour were instituted till after the publication of the Dipavansa.

who may justly be called, on his authority, the founder of Buddhism in Ceylon.

Some writers (as Professor Oldenberg, Preface to Vinaya, p. 1, etc.) have been led by independent courses of argument to doubt the whole story, and the derivation of Ceylon Buddhism directly from Magadha. They think Buddhism found its way to Ceylon by way of the continent through gradual intercourse, and was not the result of a sudden conversion at the teaching of an individual. I cannot so set aside the evidence. In regard to the earlier history of the sacred books before Asoka's time, I incline, as I have admitted, to the side of scepticism, and I have shown why; but I cannot see any such reason here. That Mahinda came from Magadha by whatever stages to Ceylon, and established Buddhism by the favour of the king Tissa, who was an ally or a dependant of Asoka, and that Mahinda's sister Sanghamitta followed him and brought with her a branch of the tree which was held sacred in Bihar;—these are, I think, facts of history. They are decorated in the chronicle with innumerable embellishments,—the sea was covered with flowers, deities danced before the king, etc., etc.,—but these are but decorations which can be dropped out of notice without injury to the substance of the record. In regard even to European history we have come to learn that early stories are not, because they are mixed up with poetical fiction, therefore necessarily valueless to the historian, and still more certainly is

it the case in Indian literature, modern as well as ancient, that records adorned, or disfigured, whichever we choose to call it, by wild exaggerations, are yet substantially true. We are not to doubt that a meeting was held, because it is said that 84,000 monks attended it, or to doubt that many monks came because it is said that they came through the air. If we doubt the central part, it is on other grounds.

One argument, which at first sight might seem to support the chronicle, cannot be justly alleged on its side; perhaps some will think the facts tell rather the other way. I allude to the name Mihintale, borne by the place where the great Elder is said to have resided. It is sometimes taken for granted that this name, now attached to a place six miles east of Anuradhapura, where several ancient temples and dagabas are, and where 'Mahinda's bed' (or place of meditation) is shown,—that the name Mihintale is a witness, if not to the fact of Mahinda's coming, at least to the antiquity of the story. But this is not the case. The name cannot be shown to be an ancient one. It does not occur in the earlier part of the Mahavansa. There (ch. xvi., etc.) the place is called Cetiyagiri (Shrine Hill), which proves nothing. A tank was named by Aggabodhi, about 1100 A.D., Mahindatata Vapi. This is, I believe, the earliest intimation that Cetiyagiri was getting to be called Mihintale. In later chapters we find a garden of the same name, and a tank Mahindataláka

(ch. lxxix. v. 28), which is the Pali equivalent of the Sinhalese Mihintale. But in the fourth century A.D. the place had no such name. The fact that the historian gives an explanation of its being called Cetiyagiri (ch. xvii.) and does not allude to—what would have been still more to his point—its being named after Mahinda, seems conclusive proof of this.[1]

This throws some doubt on the antiquity of the Mahinda tradition, but does not avail, in my judgment, to set it aside.

The work which Mahinda effected was a thorough one, so far as Anuradhapura, the royal city, was concerned. Tissa attempted to be the Asoka of Ceylon. He exchanged gifts with the great Indian emperor, and received advice—perhaps more peremptory instructions, perhaps contributions—from him. It was natural that under his encouragement Tissa should carry on the work with vigour.

Later kings, during the next century and a half, carried on the tradition of royal patronage, and built, we are told, the rest of the great dagabas. But Tissa's work, the Thuparama, as it is called, the shrine which gave its name to the 'Shrine Park' *par excellence*, has the best claim to be actually identified with what we see to-day. Of this, and of other dagabas, we read several times in the later history that hostile kings destroyed them, and they were afterwards restored by the next orthodox dynasty. But it is no easy thing to destroy a dagaba. Being a solid mass of

[1] It is called in Mahav. xiii. *ad fin.*, the Mount Missa, with peak, Ambatthala.

brickwork, or of earth enclosed in brickwork, it can be entirely destroyed only by being carted away. A destruction, which would be enough to satisfy the hatred of the most fanatical of Tamil invaders, might yet leave enough of each of those gigantic mounds to justify the Buddhist pilgrim of to-day in the conviction that he is worshipping the same heap which was worshipped so many centuries ago.

Being content to believe, then, that Mahinda introduced Buddhism into Ceylon, I have next to try to answer the question, 'Did he bring the literature as we have it?'

The chronicles rather take it for granted than directly assert that he did. They mention the discourses which he recited on different occasions, and sum up by saying (Mahav. ch. xx.) that he made known the religion of the vanquisher, the full text (pariyatti), the rule of conduct (paṭipatti), and the conditions of attainment (paṭivedho).

Of his bringing books they say nothing; nothing of the building of libraries or of any other honours paid to books or provision made for them. It is certain that writing was known in Buddhist India in Asoka's time. In view of the Greek influence it was impossible that it should be otherwise; but there is reason to doubt whether, even in India, writing had begun to be used by the Buddhists to perpetuate their literature. That they could have made the classifications and the cross-references which they did make, without written copies to turn to, may seem

to us—accustomed to use books—difficult to believe; but this is not so difficult as to believe that they had books, and yet that in all their literature and in the inscriptions of Asoka, and, I may add, in the early chapters of the Mahavansa, they never once alluded to them! For the shape and material and way of preserving robes, slippers, and every detail of the monastic life, the Vinaya has elaborate prescriptions. Is it possible to believe that there would not have been some such prescriptions about books if the monks had possessed books? (See Rhys Davids' Introduction to vol. xi. of *Sacred Books of the East*, p. xxii.)

It is to the credit, then, of the veracity of the Mahavansa, that its compiler never hints at the use of books until he tells us, under the reign of Vatta Gamini Abhaya, about B.C. 80, the sacred literature was committed to writing.

It is there assumed that Mahinda had introduced the complete series. In the thirty-seventh chapter, in reference to Buddhaghosha, it is said that Mahinda had translated into Sinhalese the Commentaries which had been lost (or, at any rate, were not to be found) in India. But that the Commentaries were completed in Mahinda's time is extremely improbable. It is also extremely improbable that Commentaries like these, which have neither brevity nor systematic structure to secure them, could be orally transmitted; and in the face of these improbabilities, the *obiter dictum* of the thirty-seventh chapter—occurring in the

narrative of events six centuries later—cannot be received.

We must conclude then that Mahinda, and those who followed him, brought in their memories, and committed to the memory of the Maha Vihara fraternity, the main part of text of the three Pitakas as it was settled at the Council of Patna, that is, as we have it now.[1]

The missionaries that Asoka, or Moggali, his guide in matters of religion, sent out to Cashmere, or to Nepaul or elsewhere, may have effected no lasting result; but it was not so with the embassy to Lanka. The Emperor's own son had given up the pride of vice-regal authority, and the prospect of the Chariot of Empire, to be robed among the followers, as he at least believed them to be, of purity and love. This Mahinda must have been a man of extraordinary power. He must have combined the tone and deportment of the calm hermit, the prodigious memory of the trained student, and the active capacities of the statesman. The impression which he made upon the island was a very deep and lasting one; the ideal of Buddhism was embodied in him, as tradition represented him; and if our history is trustworthy at all, he must have really embodied it in no small degree, or he could not have won, even with the authority of Asoka, even from the flattered Devanampiya Tissa, so rapid and complete a success. The zeal of the monarch who

[1] That Mahinda brought the three Pitakas is first, I think, expressly stated in Samantapásádiká, p. 312.

sent him, the courage, devotion, and ability of Mahinda himself, the enthusiasm with which he was welcomed,—these all stand out as facts to which there are few parallels, and which are in curious contrast to the ordinary tenure of life in India and Ceylon.

Are they facts? we are compelled to ask again; and again we are compelled to accept them. The doings and sayings of Gotama, and the royal enthusiasm of Bimbisara, and the donation of Veluvana, these are perhaps only half substantial. We know them at best only through the gradually accumulated records of one or two centuries; but with Asoka, Mahinda, and Tissa, we are on historical ground: the rock of Girnar, the Mahavihara, the Thuparama of Anuradhapura, are substantial facts.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XXII.

THE LESSER SERMON OF THE PARABLE OF THE ELEPHANT'S FOOTMARKS.

THUS I have heard:—Once upon a time the Buddha was residing at Sávatthi in Anathapindika's park, the bamboo grove. At that time the Brahman Jánussoni drove out from Sávatthi about mid-day in a covered[1] chariot of pure white. The Brahman Jánussoni saw the Brahman ascetic Pilotika coming towards him from a distance, and when he saw him said thus: 'Whence is the reverend Vaccháyano coming at mid-day?' 'I come, friend, from the presence of the "Samana" Gotama.' 'What think you, reverend Vaccháyano, of Gotama's wisdom and power of exposition; do you think him a sage?' 'Who am I, sir, and how should I estimate the proficiency in

[1] Some render this 'drawn by mares.'

wisdom of Gotama? He, methinks, would be a perfect man who could estimate Gotama's wisdom and exposition. This is high praise indeed, sir, with which you praise the Samana Gotama.' 'Who am I,—who am I to praise Gotama? My lord Gotama is the centre of all praise;[1] he is the best of gods and men.' 'What such mighty excellence do you see, reverend Vaccháyano, in Gotama, that you are so devoted to him?' 'Just as if a clever elephant-tracker were to go into an elephant forest, and saw in that forest an elephant's foot-mark (páda) of great size, extended in length and wide in breadth, he would come to the certain conclusion: "Ah! that is a great elephant;" just so, since I saw in the Samana Gotama four points (pada) I came to this certain conclusion, "The Blessed One is a full Buddha, the Doctrine taught by him is perfect, the system of his Community is perfect," and those four points are these:—

'I see, sir, sometimes certain sages of the Warrior caste, subtle, disputatious, hairsplitters,[2] they go about refuting other people's doctrines by their cleverness; they hear it said that the Samana Gotama is coming to such and such a village or town; they prepare a question: "We will go and ask Gotama this question; if he answers in this way, then we will prove him wrong in this way; if he answers in that way, we will prove him wrong in that way." As soon as they hear Gotama is come to the place they set off to visit him. Gotama expounds his doctrine, instructs them with his doctrine, brings the truth home to them, kindles their interest, fills them with satisfaction; under the influence of that instruction, and conviction, and interest, and full satisfaction, they never ask Gotama the question, much less prove him wrong,—they inevitably become Gotama's disciples. When I saw in the Samana Gotama this first mark, I came to the conclusion: "The Blessed One is a full Buddha; the Doctrine he teaches is true; the system of his Community is good." I see the same with wise men of the Brahman caste, and from this second mark I draw the same conclusion. I see it with wise men among the Cultivator caste, and I draw the same conclusion from this third mark.

'Again, I see it in the case of wise ascetics. They too (under the same influence and conviction, instead of asking the question they

[1] 'Praised by the praised.' The commentaries explain that like sweet flowers that need no added perfume from outside, Gotama derives his praise from his own perfections; to speak in his praise is 'to gild refined gold,' etc.

[2] Not exactly in our sense: they can cleave a minute mark from a distance.

had prepared) beg Gotama to allow them to come forth from household life into the homeless, and Gotama accepts their profession. They being thus professed, some of them choosing solitude and living in unremitting zeal and effort, in no long time enjoy the full attainment and conscious intuition, even in this world, of that sublime goal of the religious life, for the sake of which noble youths rightly go forth from house and home to the homeless life. Such men say: "We had all but perished, we had all but utterly perished; we called ourselves ascetics when we were no ascetics; we called ourselves Brahmans when we were no Brahmans; we called ourselves saints when we were no saints; now we are ascetics, now we are Brahmans, now we are saints." And when I saw in the Samana Gotama this fourth mark, I said'—(as before).

When Vaccháyano had said this the Brahman Jánussoni got down from his pure white covered car, drew his robe over one shoulder, made an obeisance in the direction of the Buddha, and three times uttered this enthusiastic cry: 'Glory to the blessed, holy, perfect, Buddha!' 'Certainly,' he added, 'I must not fail to come into the presence of that lord Gotama; certainly I must not fail to have conversation with him.' So Jánussoni the Brahman went where Gotama was: having got there he saluted him, and after the usual words of courtesy had been gone through, took a respectful seat on one side. So sitting, he repeated to the Buddha the whole of his conversation with the Brahman ascetic Pilotika. Thereupon the Buddha said: 'That is not a full and complete version, Brahman, of the parable of the elephant marks, so listen, Brahman, and I will tell you the full and complete version of the elephant-mark parable; attend to it well.' 'I will, sir,' the Brahman promised.

'If a skilled elephant-tracker goes into an elephant forest, and sees in that forest a large footprint, long lengthwise and broad across, if he is a skilled elephant-tracker he does not at once conclude, "That is a great elephant." Why? There are, Brahman, in an elephant forest female elephants of a dwarf breed whose feet are large; and it may be, he says to himself, the track of one of those. He follows it up; and as he follows it up he sees in the forest a large footprint, long and broad, and with rubbing high up on the trunks of trees; but he does not at once conclude, "That is a great elephant." Why? There are, Brahman, in an elephant forest tall she-elephants of the breed called "the tall dark-tushed," whose feet are large; and it may be, he says to himself, the track of one of

those. He follows it up; and as he follows it up he sees in the forest a large footprint, long and broad, rubbing high up, and trunks of trees scratched by the marks of tusks, but he does not at once conclude, "That is a great elephant." Why? There are, Brahman, in an elephant forest tall she-elephants,[1] whose feet are large; and it may be, he says to himself, the track of one of those. He follows it up; and as he follows it up he sees in the forest a large footprint, long and broad, rubbing high up, and trunks scratched by tusks, and with branches broken off high up, and he sees the elephant himself under a tree or out in the open, moving, or standing, or sitting, or lying down: then he is certain: "there is really a great elephant." Just so, Brahman, when a perfect one is born in the world, a holy absolute Buddha, accomplished in knowledge and in conduct, one who has reached the perfect grade of beings, seeing through the worlds, the unsurpassed trainer of men, teacher of gods and men,—a Blessed Buddha; what he has attained to see by his own supernatural insight, he utters to this world,[2] with the worlds of devas, of Máras, of Brahmas; to all beings, Brahmans and ascetics, gods and men. He expounds a doctrine beautiful in beginning, beautiful in midst, beautiful in end, with the meaning and with the text, and proclaims the religious life in all its fulness and purity. That doctrine is heard by a householder, or one of householder caste, or one born in some other caste. On hearing that doctrine he grasps faith in the Tathágata. When he has attained that grasp of faith he reflects thus: "House-living is confined and dusty (with the blinding dust of desire); the hermit life is life in the open air. It is not easy, while living in a house, to lead the religious life in unbroken fulness, in unbroken purity, in flawless perfection. I had better put off my hair, and put on the yellow robes, and go forth from the house into the houseless state." Soon he leaves his little wealth or his great wealth, as the case may be; leaves his little circle of relatives or his great circle of relatives, as the case may be; puts on the yellow robes and goes forth from house and home into the houseless state.

'Thus gone forth and admitted into the community, he enters into the rules and way of life of the mendicants. He abstains from

[1] Of the breed named Uccá-kaneruká, whose tusks (or tushes) are short, like the budding flower of the kaneru-tree.

[2] This is otherwise taken: 'Having by his own supernatural insight come to know the whole world of devas, etc. . . . he utters it.'

destroying life; he has laid aside the stick and the arrow; he is scrupulous, merciful, kind, and compassionate to all things that have life and being.

'He renounces theft, and desists from taking what is not given; takes (only) what is given, desires only what is given, and keeps himself from stealing and guile. He renounces unchastity, and lives in chastity and continence, having desisted from all sexual acts and intercourse. He renounces lying, and desists from it, being truth-telling, truth-abiding, steady, trustworthy, not ready to deceive his neighbour. He renounces slanderous speaking, and desists from it: what he hears here he does not tell there to divide those from these, what he hears there he does not tell here to divide these from those: and so is a joiner of the divided, and an encourager of those who are at one: unity is his pleasure, his passion, his delight; and the words he utters are words that make for unity. He renounces abusive speaking, and desists from it; he will utter only such speech as is sweet, pleasant to the ear, loving, winning the heart, courteous, giving pleasure and happiness to everybody. He renounces talking nonsense; he speaks in season, speaks of facts, speaks to the purpose, speaks of Doctrine and of Rule; when he speaks, what he says is worth treasuring, full of seasonable illustrations, and well divided.[1]

'He abstains from the destruction of any groups of seed or germs. He eats but once, abstaining at night, and abstains from meals at wrong times. He abstains from the sight of dancing, singing, playing (on harp, etc.), and shows. He abstains from wearing garlands, perfumes, ointments, from all means of toilet and adornment. He abstains from high couches and wide couches. He abstains from receiving of gold or silver; of raw corn; of women and girls; of slave men and slave women; of goats and she-goats; of fowls and pigs; of elephants, cows, horses, mares, of fields and lands. He abstains from going on errands and messages; from trade and selling, from cheating by false balances, by false metals, and by false measures; from fraud, deceit, dishonesty, and roguery; from cutting, striking, binding, robbery, plundering, and violence.

'He is contented with such robes as are sufficient for the body, with such alms-food as suffices for the belly; wherever he goes he takes all he needs with him. Just as a winged bird, whither-

[1] Technical terms referring to the composition and expounding of Suttas.

soever it flies, carries no other burden than its own wings; so is the monk contented with such robes as are sufficient for the body, with such alms-food as is sufficient for the belly; wherever he goes he takes all he needs wiih him.

'Having attained to this noble system of conduct, he experiences within him the bliss of faultlessness. When with the eye he sees a form, he does not catch at its characteristics or its details: he practises avoiding that which may be the cause of covetousness, dismalness, and other sinful and evil tempers flowing in upon the man who lives with unrestrained sense of sight; he guards his sense of sight, he attains restraint of the sense of sight. So with regard to sounds which are perceived by the ear, smells by the nose, taste by the tongue, touch by the body, objects of cognition by the mind; he practises restraint of all these organs of sense.[1] Having attained to this noble restraint of the senses, he experiences within himself the bliss of detachment. In going or in coming he acts with recollection, in looking this way or looking that way, in drawing in his hand or stretching it out, in wearing robes and bowl, in eating or drinking, in feeding or tasting, in all the necessary acts of life, in going, standing, sitting, sleeping, waking, speaking, or being silent, he acts with recollection.

'Having attained perfection in this noble system of conduct and this noble restraint of the senses, and this noble state of conscious recollectedness, he chooses a secluded dwelling-place, a forest, the foot of a tree, a hill, grotto, mountain cave, burial-ground, uncultivated ground,[2] or open ground, or heap of straw. After his meal, when he has returned from begging he sits down, turning in his legs into the cross-legged attitude, erecting his body straight upright, fixing his consciousness before his face. Then having put away all covetousness, he abides with mind cleansed of covetousness, he purges his mind of covetousness; putting away the taint of malice, he abides with no malice in his mind, with kindness and compassion to all that lives and exists, he purges his mind of the taint of malice: putting away sloth he abides unslothful, with consciousness full of light, thoughtful and recollected he purges his mind of sloth; putting away pride and querulousness, he abides, not lifted up by pride, his mind calmed down within him, he

[1] Here and in one or two other places the original has been a little condensed.
[2] The printed text has here Vanapatthaṁ for vanapanthaṁ.

purges his mind of the restlessness of pride; putting away doubt, he abides on the other side of (the river of) doubt; resting without raising difficulties on right principles, he purges his mind from doubt.

'Then having put away these five hindrances, which obscure thought and weaken insight, apart from desires, apart from principles of evil, he abides in the attainment of pleasure and joy[1] which springs from mental freedom, in which there is still the exercise of reflection and movement of thought—the first stage of meditation. This, Brahman, deserves to be called a Tathágatha mark (or stage of attainment), here we may say is the trace of the Tathágatha's presence, his rubbings and the marks of his tusks. But not yet does the noble disciple conclude:—"Bhagavá is an absolute Buddha, the Doctrine proclaimed by Bhagavá is true, the practice of the Community is good."

'Further, Brahman, again, all exercise of reflection and movement of the mind being calmed down, in that internal clearness in which the pure mind moves alone, the mendicant abides in the attainment of that pleasure and joy born of self-concentration, which involves no exercise of reflection or movement of the mind—the second stage of meditation. This, too, Brahman, deserves to be called a Tathágatha mark (or stage of attainment), here we may say is the trace of the Tathágatha's presence, of his rubbings and the marks made by his tusks. But not yet does the noble disciple conclude:—"Bhagavá is an absolute Buddha, the Doctrine proclaimed by Bhagavá is true, the practice of the Community is good."

'Further, Brahman, again, the mendicant, pleasureless and indifferent, abides in conscious recollectedness, and feels through all his bodily frame that joy which the noble ones describe as the joy of conscious indifference,—so he abides in the attainment of the third stage of meditation. This, too, Brahman, deserves to be called a Tathágatha mark (or stage of attainment), here we may say is the trace of the Tathágatha's rubbings and tusk-marks. But not yet does the noble disciple conclude:—"Bhagavá is an absolute

[1] 'Pleasure' is here used for 'príti,' a superficial *movement* of satisfaction, as distinguished from 'joy,' 'sukham,' a deeper-seated *state* of satisfaction.

In the first stage there is mental freedom and movement of thought, in the second unity of mind but no movement of thought; in the third there is still joy; in the fourth even this is gone.

Buddha, the Doctrine proclaimed by Bhagavá is true, the practice of the Community is good."

'Further, Brahman, again, the mendicant, by abandonment of joy and abandonment of pain, those former satisfactions and dissatisfactions gone, abides in the attainment of that painless and joyless purity of conscious indifference, which is the fourth stage of meditation. This, too, Brahman, deserves to be called a Tathágatha mark (or stage of attainment), here we may say is the trace of the Tathágatha's presence, of his rubbings and tusk-marks. But not yet does the noble disciple conclude:—'Bhagavá is an absolute Buddha, the Doctrine proclaimed by Bhagavá is true, the practice of the Community is good."

'When thus the mind is collected, purged, white, without lust, freed from corruption, and become soft and workable, firm and motionless, he bends his mind to the knowledge of the recollection of former dwellings.[1] He calls to memory the countless variety of former abodes—that is, one birth and two births and three births four births and five births, and twenty births and thirty births and forty births and fifty births and a hundred births and a thousand births and a hundred thousand births and many closing cycles and many opening cycles and many opening and closing cycles. He says to himself: "In such a place (or, in such a birth) I was named so and so, of such and such a tribe, such and such appearance, living on such and such food, experiencing such and such joys and pains, with such and such limits of lifetime: when I passed away out of that, I was born in such a place or condition, and then I had such and such a name, was of such and such a tribe, such and such a caste, living on such and such food, experiencing such and such joys and pains, with such and such limits of lifetime; passing thence I was born here." Thus he calls to memory a countless variety of former dwellings, with the characteristics and description of each. This, too, Brahman, deserves to be called a Tathágatha mark (or stage of attainment), here we may say is the trace of the Tathágatha's presence, of his rubbings and tusk-marks. But not yet does the noble disciple conclude:—"Bhagavá is an absolute Buddha, the Doctrine proclaimed by Bhagavá is true, the practice of the Community is good."

[1] This is the literal meaning of the word; although the idea 'former dwellings of the soul' is alien to Buddhism.

'When thus the mind is collected, purged, white, without stain, freed from obscurations, and become soft and workable, firm, and motionless, he bends his mind to the knowledge of the passing away and re-birth of beings. With divine sight, pure, superhuman, he sees beings passing away and being born,[1] high or low, of good appearance or bad, in happy condition or unhappy, he recognises beings going according to their sum of action (karma). "Ah! friends," he says to himself, "these beings having adopted a wicked course of bodily action, of word and of thought, having been blasphemers of the noble ones, holders of false opinion, acquiescing in the conduct that accords with false opinions,—these, at the breaking-up of the body, after death have been born in an infernal state, in an evil condition, in the place of torment, in hell;" or, "These beings having adopted a good course of bodily action, of word and of thought, not blasphemers of the noble ones, holders of true opinions, adopting the conduct that accords with true opinions,—these, at the breaking-up of the body after death, have been born in a happy condition, in heaven, or in this world." Thus with divine sight, pure, superhuman, he sees beings passing away and being born, high or low, of good appearance or bad, in happy condition or unhappy; he recognises beings going according to their sum of action. This, too, Brahman, deserves to be called a Tathágatha mark (or stage of attainment), here we may say is the trace of the Tathágatha's presence, of his rubbings and tusk-marks. But not yet does the noble disciple conclude:—"Bhagavá is an absolute Buddha, the Doctrine proclaimed by Bhagavá is true, the practice of the Community is good."

'When his mind is thus collected, purged, white, without stain, freed from obscurations, and become soft and workable, firm, and motionless, he bends his mind to the knowledge of the annihilation of the forms of moral evil. He recognises in its reality what pain is, he recognises in its reality what the cause of pain is, he recognises in its reality what the destruction of pain is, he recognises in its reality what the course which leads to the destruction of pain is; he recognises in its reality what the forms of moral evil are, he recognises in its reality what the cause of the forms of moral evil is, he recognises in its reality what the destruction of the forms

[1] The words used here for the cessation of one life and the entrance on another imply, the one, 'fading or falling away;' the other, 'accidental dropping into' (a new condition).

of moral evil is, he recognises in its reality what the course is which leads to the destruction of the forms of moral evil. This, too, Brahman, deserves to be called a Tathágatha mark (or stage of attainment), here we may say is the trace of the Tathágatha's presence, of his rubbings and tusk-marks. But not yet does the noble disciple conclude :—"Bhagavá is an absolute Buddha, the Doctrine proclaimed by Bhagavá is true, the practice of the Community is good."

'When he thus knows, thus sees, his mind is released from the evil of lust, and his mind is released from the evil of[1] (love of) existence, and his mind is released from the evil of ignorance. In that release of the mind the knowledge arises, that he is released, that birth is annihilated, the religious course lived out, all that has to be done is done, there is no further any cause for remaining here.[2] This, Brahman, may be truly called the foot-mark, the rubbings, the tusk-marks of Tathágatha. Herein, Brahman, the noble disciple has reached the certainty :—"Bhagavá is an absolute Buddha, the Doctrine proclaimed by Bhagavá is true, the practice of the Community is good."

'This, Brahman, is the full and complete form of the parable of the elephant footmarks.'

When this had been said, the Brahman Jánussoni thus spoke to Bhagavá :—'Excellent, Lord Gotama ; it is as if, Lord Gotama, one should set up what was overturned, or open what was closed, or show the way to one who was astray, or bring a lighted oil-lamp where all was dark, so that those who have sight may behold the form of things : just so has the doctrine been preached by my Lord Gotama in multiform method. I betake me for refuge to Gotama, to the Doctrine, and to the mendicant Community. May my Lord Gotama take me as a professed follower, for I go to him for refuge from this day forward while I have life.'

[1] No single word in our terminology will express what the 'Asavas' have in common. They are, lusts of all sorts, love of existence, and ignorance, to which false opinion is sometimes added as a fourth. I have here called them forms of 'moral evil ;' elsewhere 'corruptions.'

[2] That is either : 'In this world of men,' or 'In this condition of rahatship.'

CHAPTER XXIII

BETWEEN MAHINDA AND BUDDHAGHOSHA

AFTER the death of Mahinda, the successors of Devanampiyatissa went on building dwellings for the monks, and extending the domain of the great monastery of Anuradhapura. There was as yet but one centre, and one association; no rivalry disturbed the unanimity of the happy children of Mahinda.

The first troubles that came were those caused by foreign invasion. The Tamils of South India invaded Ceylon, and their heroic leader Elára established himself as king; but he reigned with so much goodness and justice, that, heretic Brahman as he was, his memory has always been held in esteem, almost in affection. But the sacred island was not long to lie under the usurped authority of a Brahman king. The patriot hero Dutthagamini was greater even than Elara, and, in a contest which did honour to both, overcame and slew him, and recovered the throne of Lanka for her Buddhist kings. The war had been undertaken by Dutthagamini as a religious duty, and when he had conquered, his victory was employed for the service and extension of Buddhism. Aided by supernatural power, and finding at every turn supernatural wealth

ready to his hand—such is the light in which the Mahavansa sets the story—he built, as a hall for the monks to meet in, the famous Brazen Palace (or Brass-roofed Palace). It was constructed after a plan brought straight from heaven. Repeatedly destroyed in after-times and repeatedly restored, it is represented even now by some sixteen hundred stone pillars; but what the edifice was like, whose seven stories rested on these pillars, antiquarians are puzzled to conjecture. Even more celebrated and far more sacred than the Brazen Palace, the king erected the 'Great Shrine,' or Ruwanweli Dagaba; and in it he placed, when he had obtained them from the mysterious Naga world, those relics of the Buddha which at the time of Gotama's decease had been set aside—so runs the audacious legend—for the future sanctification of Ceylon! In the description of the circumstances under which the relic-dome was built, and of the treasures employed in its construction, the chronicle exhausts the resources of Eastern imagination; and if we held that where the surroundings are fabulous no kernel of truth can be securely grasped, we might put the whole story aside as a fairy tale. But there at Anuradhapura now the great dagaba still stands. It has been defaced and renewed, enlarged and altered, a hundred times; but the substantial mass of that gigantic mound—a pile of brickwork out of which a city might be built—is probably the very same material that was heaped there by the chivalrous conqueror of Elara. This was about B.C. 160.

The history for nearly another century contains nothing to interest one; only the murders by which each king gained the throne, the sacred buildings which secured him merit after he had gained it, and the Tamil invasions by which his reign was disturbed. At length, about 90 B.C., the reign of Vattagamini Abhaya is distinguished by the erection of another of the great dagabas which still astonish us at Anuradhapura, the Abhayagiri. But from this erection dates a division which for fourteen centuries marred the unity of Buddhism in Ceylon. An Abhayagiri fraternity grew up, which not only became a rival in importance to the Great Vihara, but deserved the stigma of heresy by maintaining the authority of certain books which the older fraternity excluded from the canon. If the history at this point is true, this error was promulgated at the outset of their foundation by the Abhayagiri monks, and was met on the part of the orthodox by a measure which was of the greatest literary importance. The monks had hitherto handed down the sacred text orally, but 'at this period the priests foreseeing the perdition of the people (from the perversion of the true doctrines) assembled, and in order that the religion might endure for ages, recorded the same in books.'[1]

From this date for the next three centuries there is little to record. Tamil influence increased, and 'bad men' often had the upper hand; but whenever

[1] Turnour's Mahavansa, chapter xxxiii. The parenthesis, which Turnour has added to the original, should rather be 'from the promulgation of an erroneous canon.'

prosperity revived new shrines were built, and the Brazen Palace, which seems always to have been the first to suffer, was rebuilt. But an epoch is marked, about 300 A.D., by the reign of Mahasena. This king adopted those tenets which were hostile to the great monastery, and prescribed its monks. They fled to the south-east of the island, and for nine years the ancient foundation was desolate. The Brazen Palace and many other Mahavihara buildings were pulled down, and their materials were used to extend the buildings of the Abhayagiri monks. Mahasena was persuaded, however, by his minister to restore them, and he did his best by vast works of merit—of which the Mahavihara monks were the recipients—to balance the demerit he had incurred.

After him, the Rajavaliya tells us, the race of kings deteriorated. They no longer boasted the pure blood of the 'Solar' race. Of such deterioration the older history, the Mahavansa, knows nothing, though alliances with Indian royal families are recorded. But however that may be, it is the period following Mahasena that is marked by that literary activity to which the continuity of Ceylon history is due. The national characteristics of the past were carried on into later centuries by the compilation of the Mahavansa, and the religious literature was crowned by the works of Buddhaghosha.

Two important features, between which a connection may be suspected, mark this fourth century.

It is with Mahasena and Siri Meghavanna, his son,

that the cultus of Mahinda, so far as we know, begins.

At this time an image of him was made, and the custom of carrying it in procession was instituted.[1] This was no doubt a measure directed to the maintenance of the prestige of the Mahavihara, which Mahasena's early violence had impaired, and which had been further threatened by the appearance of a second rival community, that of the Jetavana, an offset under Mahasena's auspices from the Abhayagiri.

The other marked feature of the period is the intercourse with India. A Brahman princess brought across from Kalinga, in Siri Meghavanna's reign, the sacred Tooth of Buddha, and the cultus of that relic began. Uuder the next king we are told that art flourished, especially sculpture, of which the image of Mahinda was perhaps one of the first examples. The next king, Buddhadása, was an accomplished physician, and imitated the great Asoka in erecting hospitals. In his reign, it is said, the Suttas were translated into Sinhalese. In short, there was a development of art and literature, and that in connection with intercourse with India: a development, of which all that is represented by the name of Buddhaghosha,[2] was the culmination.

Between these two features, the cultus of Mahinda and the literary development under Indian influence, the connection to be suspected is pretty obvious.

About this time, as part of the literary movement,

[1] Mahavansa, xxxvii. [2] See next Chapter.

the Mahavansa was compiled from the archives of the Mahavihara. Now the Mahavansa is little better than fabulous before the date of Asoka and Mahinda, and very largely mixed with fable after that point of time. But between the wild legends of lions and island princesses, which precede the narrative of Mahinda's mission, and the extravagant poetry in which the history of Dutthagamini is buried, there is a layer of minute and accurate history, about Asoka, his immediate predecessors, and his missions, which is verified beyond a doubt by Greek historians and extant monuments.

My suspicion is that light was thrown upon that particular period by information which arrived, perhaps along with the Tooth, from India; information which placed the foundation of the Mahavihara in definite historical surroundings, and revived with emphasis the memory of Mahinda and the example of Asoka. It is hardly irrelevant to note that in the eulogy which the chronicler pronounces on Dhatusena, the king who is said to have published the Mahavansa (or Dipavansa), it is declared that he can be worthily compared only to the great Asoka.

Of the increasing intercourse with the continent which marked this period, an interesting illustration is afforded by the visit of Fa Hien. Fa Hien was a pilgrim from China, and not only a devoted Buddhist but a writer at once picturesque and careful. He visited Anuradhapura just at the end of the period we are discussing, that is, early in the fifth century A.D.,

and his account agrees completely with the native chronicle.

He begins the record of his visit to Ceylon by repeating the traditions which he had learnt, just as they are contained in the Mahavansa, about the early inhabitants of the island and the visits of the Buddha. Then he tells us, very graphically, what he saw. The great dagabas were in their glory; that of the Abhayagiri impressed him most; and he says it was four hundred cubits high, and grandly adorned with gold and silver, and finished with a combination of all the precious substances.[1] In the monastery adjoining it there were five thousand monks. His admiration was greatly excited by an image of Buddha made of green jade, which was twenty cubits high and had 'an appearance of solemn dignity which words cannot express.' He describes the Bo-tree, and mentions the 'vihara of Buddha's tooth,' and speaks of the whole city of Anuradhapura as stately and well kept. The total number of monks in the island he understood to be sixty thousand.[2] Of the procession (or perahara) of the Tooth he gives a detailed account, and it is to be noted that it was at the Abhayagiri that the principal ceremonies took place.

Of the Mahavihara he speaks as if he held quite a secondary position, although it had three thousand monks. But a monk had lately died there who was

[1] Legge's *Fa Hien*, pp. 101-110.

[2] I suppose in this and the other cases a cipher might be taken off the pilgrim's figures.

held to be a Rahat;[1] that is, one who had attained to supernatural knowledge and powers; and the pilgrim describes his cremation. 'Fa Hien,' he says, 'had not arrived in time (to see him) alive, but only saw his funeral.'

And the other instance which he mentions of individual distinction is also to the credit of the Mahavihara. At the 'Chaitya Hill'—not yet known as Mihintale—was a monk of famous virtue named Dhammagutta.[2]

Fa Hien describes in glowing terms the virtue and the liberality of the king, and gives a minute account of the ceremonies at the granting of a site for a new vihara; an account which agrees perfectly with what the chronicles relate and existing monuments prove.

Finally he gives a long report of a sermon which he heard preached on the Bowl of Buddha.

But of Buddhaghosha, or his literary works, Fa Hien has nothing to say. His visit took place undoubtedly before that of the great commentator.[3]

NOTE.—DATE OF FA HIEN'S VISIT TO CEYLON.

THE date of Fá Hien's visit cannot, it appears, be fixed on Chinese authority more nearly than to the period A.D. 317—478. The limits are drawn more closely by a comparison of his statements with those of the Mahávansa.

[1] See pp. 47, 455.

[2] Unless any one is prepared to guess that this was Buddhaghosha himself, which is very unlikely, Dhammagutta is not named in the Mahavansa.

[3] See Note below.

Since he found cultus of the Tooth in full force, while yet he does not mention it as having recently arrived, and since, while he mentions the Shrine-hill (now Mihintale), he makes no allusion to Mahinda, it follows that his visit took place certainly after, and probably long after, the accession of Sirimeghavanna, A.D. 304, in whose reign the Tooth was brought to Ceylon, and the cultus of Mahinda celebrated with much splendour.

On the other hand, in the reign of Mahánáma, A.D. 412-434, Buddhaghosha came; of whose work Fá Hien could hardly have failed to make mention; and after Mahánáma's reign usurpations and invasions impaired that splendour which the pilgrim saw at its height. Within these limits there were three kings—Jetthatissa, Buddhadása, and Upatissa; but none of these corresponds with the king whom Fá Hien visited so well as Mahánáma does.

Jetthatissa seems to have been a great promoter of art and sculpture, probably derived from India; and Fá Hien's mention of a splendid statue of Buddha in jade, which material must have come from India, suggests that his visit was later than this king's reign.

Buddhadása was so celebrated for his extraordinary medical skill that it is most improbable that Fá Hien could have left this unmentioned had Buddhadása been the king on whose merits he dwells so fully.

Upatissa seems to have been a very devoted adherent of the Mahávihára, but the pilgrim represents the Abhayagiri as very much in the ascendant, and enjoying the royal patronage.

Mahánáma, on the other hand, is recorded as having given in his early days three viháras to the Abhayagiri monks. His favouring that sect may in part account for his character being described by the chronicler in terms less glowing than those in which he is described by the guest of the rival community.

It may be concluded therefore, with some confidence, that Fá Hien was at Anurádhapura early in Mahánáma's reign, that is, within a few years after A.D. 412.

CHAPTER XXIV

BUDDHAGHOSHA AND THE 'COMMENTARIES'

IT would be hardly too much to say that Buddhaghosha was the second founder of the Buddhism of Ceylon. The Ceylon Buddhism of the present day, as it is professed by its most learned and most earnest adherents, is virtually the religion of Buddhaghosha. The interpretation of the sacred books, which has prevailed since his time, and is authoritative now for native scholars, is the interpretation fixed by Buddhaghosha and his school. He lived about 420 A.D., in the interval between the composition of Dipavansa and that of the Mahavansa. The following is the record of him in the Mahavansa:—

'He was a Brahman of Magadha, highly accomplished in the Brahman philosophy and religion, and wandered about India, "as a disputant anxious for controversy." In his wanderings he lodged at a certain Buddhist Vihara, where he fell into argument with an elder named Revata, by whom he was converted. He soon became a distinguished disciple,

and was called Buddhaghosha, "the voice of Buddha" (or rather, perhaps, "he who has a voice like the Buddha"). In India he composed an original work called Ñánodaya, and wrote a commentary on part of the Abhidhamma.'

He contemplated, the Chronicle tells us, writing in India a concise Commentary on the whole of the sacred text, and received from Révata the following advice:—

'The text alone (of the Pitakattaya) has been preserved in this land: the Atthakathá are not extant here; nor is there any version to be found of the various expositions of the teachers. The Sinhalese Atthakathá are genuine. They are composed in the Sinhalese language by the inspired and profoundly wise Mahinda, who had previously consulted the discourses of Buddha, authenticated at the three convocations, and the dissertations and arguments of Sáriputta and others; and they are extant among the Sinhalese. Repairing thither, and studying the same, translate (them) according to the rules of the grammar of the Magadhas. It will be an act conducive to the welfare of the whole world.'

The Mahavansa continues: 'Having been thus advised, this eminently wise personage, rejoicing therein, departed from thence, and visited this island in the reign of this monarch, Mahanáma (A.D. 412-434). On reaching the Mahavihara at Anuradhapura, he entered the Mahapadhana hall, the most splendid of the apartments in the Vihara, and listened to the

Sinhalese Atthakathá, and the Théraváda, from the beginning to the end, expounded by the Théra Sanghapála, and became thoroughly convinced that they conveyed the true meaning of the doctrines of the lord of Dhamma. Thereupon, paying reverential respect to the priesthood, he thus petitioned:—"I am desirous of translating the Atthakathá, give me access to all your books." The priesthood, for the purpose of testing his qualifications, gave only two gáthá, saying: "Hence prove thy qualification; having satisfied ourselves on this point, we will then let thee have all our books." From these (taking two gáthá for his text), and consulting the Pitakattaya together with the Atthakatha, and condensing them into an abridged form, he composed the commentary called the "Visuddhimagga." Thereupon, having assembled the priesthood who had acquired a thorough knowledge of the doctrines of Buddha at the Bo-tree, he commenced to read out (the work he had composed). The devatás, in order that they might make his (Buddhaghosha's) gifts of wisdom celebrated among men, rendered that book invisible. He, however, for a second and third time, recomposed it. When he was in the act of producing his book for the third time, for the purpose of propounding it, the devatas restored the other two copies also. The assembled priests then read out the three books simultaneously. In those three versions, neither in a signification nor in a single misplacement by transposition—nay, even in the Thera controversies and

in the text (of the Pitakattaya)—was there in the measure of a verse, or in the letter of a word, the slightest variation. Thereupon the priesthood rejoicing, again and again fervently shouted forth, saying, "Most assuredly this is Metteyya (Buddha) himself;" and made over to him the books in which the Pitakattaya were recorded, together with the Atthakatha. Taking up his residence in the secluded Ganthakára Vihara at Anuradhapura, he translated, according to the grammatical rules of the Magadhas, which are the root of all languages, the whole of the Sinhalese Atthakathá (into Pali). This proved an achievement of the utmost consequence to all languages spoken by the human race.

'All the theras and acaryas held this compilation in the same estimation as the text (of the Pitakattaya). Thereafter, the objects of his mission having been fulfilled, he returned to Jambudipa, to worship at the Bo-tree at Uruvela in Magadha.' [1]

A similar account is given from Burmese sources, but there is no reason to think that it is independent. The intercourse has always been frequent between the Buddhists of Ceylon and those of Burma; and as Ceylon has been the learner in the latter centuries from her northern sister, so in the earlier days Ceylon was the source of information. We are compelled to take it on the authority of the Mahavansa that the Pali commentaries, as they are now read in Ceylon, are from the hand of Buddhaghosha.

[1] Mahavansa, ch. xxxvii. Turnour's translation, as revised by Vijesinhe.

It is impossible to say how far his work was a revival, and how far a new departure. Had the commentaries, which he is said to have imported and translated, in point of fact, been ever known in Ceylon before? Were they the old traditions of the Anuradhapura monks held from the days of Mahinda, and variously enlarged; and now re-arranged, re-modelled by a powerful mind? Or had they been elaborated in the continent of India, during the centuries through which the island had been in great measure cut off from contact with the rest of the Buddhist world? Or is the suspicion to be admitted for a moment of a still greater scepticism,—as if Buddhaghosha, and not Mahinda, was the real importer of Buddhism into Lanka?

This last suspicion has been suggested; but there is no place for it. The antiquity of the Buddhist buildings in Ceylon is alone enough to refute it. As to the other two alternatives, it is possible that the truth lies between them. It is certain that there were treatises handed down by the monks in Anuradhapura, long before Buddhaghosha's visit. The Dipavansa was written considerably, perhaps more than half a century, before his time, and the tradition which it embodies must be older still. The writer of the Dipavansa, which differs from the introductory part of a commentary only by being in verse, says that what he narrates has been 'handed down by many generations.' And Buddhaghosha certainly derived from the same sources part of the historical

introduction to his Commentaries on the Vinaya and Sutta Pitakas.

Whence these materials originally came, or how far they had been invented in the island, it is impossible with our present knowledge to say. The existence in them, wherever they are found and in whatever form they occur, of that story of Buddha's visits to Ceylon, which is absent from the Pitakas, marks them off from the original books; and prevents our believing that they were brought over by Mahinda. But neither were they introduced *de novo* by Buddhaghosha.

It is difficult, however, not to suppose that Buddhaghosha was something more than a translator[1] or repeater of texts. The Ceylon monks owed more to him than one of themselves could have brought back from a visit to the monasteries of India. It is clear that his was a powerful mind, which had arranged for itself in a clear and fairly consistent system the various materials of the sacred books and of the monastic customs. Visuddhi Magga is confessedly his work. There is no other compendium of Buddhism known at all like it, in consistency, and completeness; and in the absence of any other such, it is just to assume that it was first in Buddhaghosha's mind that the Buddha system obtained its final shape. He identified himself with the Anuradhapura school of Buddhism, became its chief

[1] That he dealt freely with his materials is amply shown in the Commentaries themselves and in the Preface to one of them, where he says that he will not repeat what he has already treated sufficiently in (his own work), the Visuddhi Magga.

light, and gave to its traditions the form which they have ever since retained.

I have exhibited, in Chapters iv.-xix., as far as my plan admitted, the contents of the canonical texts of Tipitaka; and the view which I have given of each point in it, so far as it has purported to be the Buddhist view, is according to the interpretation of the Buddhaghosha commentaries. I have had access to no others; for this is the source of whatever information I have derived from native scholars or from popular language, as well as (substantially) of that embodied in European works and editions of the Southern Buddhism.

To this predominance there is one important and significant exception. The work called the 'Questions of Menander' was older than Buddhaghosha, for he quotes it, and was probably produced not in Ceylon but in India. It is a collection of disquisitions on difficult points arising out of the sacred texts; and can only have been produced where the texts were much discussed and commented upon. It is not likely that it stood alone. It is probably the survivor of a mass of secondary literature older than that of Ceylon. In view of this work and the quotations from it, it is pretty certain that Buddhaghosha was an importer of literature into Ceylon, and not a translator only.

I must now give the reader some idea of the nature of these books of Buddhaghosha's.

A Buddhist Commentary does not differ much in purpose or contents, widely as it differs in method,

from a modern European one. The occasion and circumstances under which the text was originally uttered are related, the contents are summarised, terms and expressions are explained and illustrated, moral lessons are enforced by examples, and references are supplied to other books by which the teaching of the text is to be supplemented. The Introduction is extended, in the case of the greater commentaries, as those on the Vinaya Pitaka, on the Sutta Pitaka, and on the Jataka, into a considerable narrative. The introduction to the Commentary on the Jataka, or doings in previous lives of him who was to be the Buddha, goes back to the date, myriads of cycles ago, when, in the days of the Buddha Dipankara, he who was afterwards Gotama, was first definitely engaged to the career of a future Buddha. It mentions events in the lives which he lived during the intervening cycles, under successive Buddhas ; till it comes down to mention some of the lives in which, during the present cycle, he perfected his store of merit by heroic exercise of the ten great virtues. Then are narrated the circumstances of his deciding, at the entreaties of deities, to be born for his last, his Buddha life, and his choice, in exact conformity to the practice of previous Buddhas, of the country, clan, and family in which to be born. His birth and training, the sights which led him to seek religious life, his setting forth, his period of austere asceticism, and the attainment under the Bo-tree of full Buddhahood,—this story, now so familiar to us all, forms the 'immediate

introduction,' for it only remains to be added that after becoming Buddha and collecting his first disciples, Gotama went to dwell in such and such a place, and while there, on occasion of such and such an event in the Community, he uttered the first Jataka. Similarly, the Commentaries on the Vinaya and Sutta Pitakas, open by an account of the circumstances under which at the first Council the monks assembled, led by Kassapa, to fix for ever, by chanting them over together, the words of their Teacher's utterances. In the one case Upali, and in the other Ananda, were called upon to recite. In Ananda's case we are told also the reasons for his being chosen; his backwardness in becoming a 'Rahat,' and the exact circumstances of his attaining that full insight during the night before the session; and the miraculous way in which, to prove his attainments, he entered the hall of assembly.

And besides these introductions on a large scale to the whole collections, there are small introductions from time to time to individual portions; and in these are to be found, besides such events as are narrated in the Pitakas, a great number of other traditions about the sayings and doings of the Buddha and his monks. Many of these secondary traditions are life-like and interesting, and have a distinct historical value; not perhaps as parts of the biography of Gotama, but as samples of the life and manners of the succeeding centuries.

Throughout the Jataka Commentary, an important

element in each 'Birth-story' is the record of the circumstances which led the Buddha to tell the story. Some of these are obviously invented to lead up to the story, others give graphic pictures of monastic life, and a few may probably be true traditions of events in Gotama's history.

A careful study of these picturesque scenes and anecdotes, especially in the Jataka book, would perhaps lead to definite conclusions about their date. As far as I have noticed, there is nothing which necessarily implies familiarity with Ceylon; while the allusions to snow, to sandy deserts, and to many other things unknown to the island, prove that the ultimate source of some at least of the traditions was in North India, whatever may have been the place of their compilation.[1]

The introductions ended, the text is illustrated by such notes as these:—

When the Buddha perceived that the monks were engaged in this conversation (as recorded in the text), 'What,' asks the commentator, 'was the Buddha doing?' Then follows a full account of the way in which he used to pass his day and the night, watch by watch, with special details about the third watch, and a description of the miracles which accompanied his going out on his rounds, the soft winds that cleared his path, etc.

When a certain person is said in the text to have

[1] In a passage of the Commentary on the Dígha Nikáya, in a list of nations whose language was strange, the first place is given to the Tamils. This may indicate that Ceylon was, as tradition says, the country where the materials of the Commentary were found.

admired the good order of the monks of Gotama as contrasted with those of other teachers, the commentator gives a very elaborate description of the proper conduct of monks, and accumulates an immense number of comparisons to set forth the splendour which emanated from the Buddha's person.

Another element of a Commentary, though one from the nature of the case not always present, is the enumeration and classification of the contents of the text. This is very carefully done for the Vinaya and for the Sutta Pitakas, and leaves a believing reader no room for doubt as to what was the 'Word of Buddha.' The contents in the latter case are classified under a great variety of heads, from a great variety of points of view; of literary structure, moral purpose, and so on.

Important terms are explained, often at great length, generally with reference to etymology, and a variety of alternative views are given; these being sometimes refuted. Often a particular explanation is quoted as being that of 'the ancients,' or that of a particular school. These explanations are far from contemptible, though the derivations of words are, as might be expected, often unscientific. The principle is generally assumed, that several derivations may all be true or at least instructive. The explanation of the title of the third Collection, 'Abhidhamma,' is a favourable specimen. The prefix 'abhi,' it is stated, implies increase, distinction, honour, division, excess. A sentence is given in illustration of each of these

uses, *e.g.*, in the case of '*Raja*' and '*Abhiraja*' it implies honour, and so on. Then illustrations are given from the Abhidhamma to show how each of these, 'increase,' 'distinction,' etc., apply to its contents; for instance, in the expression, 'precious doctrines (dhammá), unlimited doctrines, unsurpassable doctrines,' the meaning is 'honoured, worthy of honour.' In short, 'Abhidhamma' means the sublime and elaborate 'Dhamma.'[1]

The variety of etymology sometimes gives rise to a variety of interpretation.[2] A certain class of sophistical disputants are called '*amaravikhepika*.' The Commentator says, 'Amara' means 'not dying.' The evasions of these sophists are *endless*. But he adds, 'Another way, *Amara* is a kind of fish, which comes up and goes down and dashes about in the water and cannot be caught; so this kind of argument is an eel-like wriggling.'

Various readings are also noticed.

Very often terms are illustrated by anecdotes. On the name of Ajatasattu, a long story is told about that king.[3] On the name of a particular form of cheating, the 'dish trick,' we are told how it is done. 'They make one dish of gold and two or three of brass to look like gold. Then they go into the country, and enter some wealthy house, and say, "Buy gold dishes." When the price is asked they offer the more expensive. The purchasers say: "How are we to know that these are gold?" "Test

[1] Sumang Vil. p. 18. [2] *Ib.* p. 133. [3] *Ib.* p. 79.

them," say the sellers. Then they rub the gold dish on the stone, give (sell) them all the dishes, and go.'

As a good specimen of the Commentator's treatment of moral terms, I may quote the distinction between 'Hiri' and 'Ottappam.' It occurs frequently in nearly the same words, and, certainly exhibits the moral method of Buddhism at its best.[1]

'Hiri' is shame at impropriety of act, for which 'modesty' is a synonym, while 'Ottappam' is 'shrinking from sin.' 'Hiri' is excited from within, 'Ottappam' from without. 'Hiri' rests on self-authority, 'Ottappam' on world-authority. 'Hiri' has the nature of modesty, 'Ottappam' of fear. 'Hiri' marks sense of propriety, 'Ottappam' marks quickness to see the danger of fault.

(1) There are four things by which a man excites within him the internal sense of 'Hiri:' considerations of rank, of age, of strength, and of learning. Of rank, as when he abstains from destroying life and other sins from the reflection: Such and such a sinful act is not the act of people of rank, it is the act of low-born people and fishers; it is not fitting for a man of such rank to commit this act. Of age, when he thinks, Such and such a sinful act is what boys would do; it is not fitting for a man of my age, etc. Of strength, when he thinks, This is what feeble-natured people would do, and not a man of my strength. Of learning,

[1] The translation is taken from a contribution of my own to the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Ceylon Branch, 1884.

when he thinks, This is the act of fools, not of wise men; it is not fit for a man of my wisdom and learning. Thus by these four considerations he excites the feeling of 'Hiri' within himself, and so, having put that feeling into his mind, abstains from the sin; hence it is said that 'Hiri' is excited within the man's self. 'Ottappam,' on the other hand, is excited by external considerations. If you do the sinful deed, you will meet with condemnation among the four companies. The wise man will condemn him as the city man does dirt; what will a monk do when the good reject? Thus 'Ottappam' is excited from without.

(2) 'Hiri' rests on self-authority; a well-born man puts himself under his own authority and superiority, and abstains from sin on the ground that it does not become one so religious, so learned, so ascetic (?) to commit sin; and thus Buddha said, 'Whoso puts himself under his own authority, and rejects demerit and practises merit, and rejects faults and practises what is faultless, he keeps himself pure.'

'Ottappam,' on the other hand, rests on world-authority.

A well-born man puts himself under the world's authority and superiority, and so abstains from sin. Great is this world-assemblage, and therein are ascetics and monks of supernatural powers and divine insight who know the minds of others. They see from afar, they see close at hand; with their mind they discern minds; they will know me; look, they will say, at that well-born man; he left home and made a sincere

profession of the monastic life, but he is living abandoned in sinful and demeritorious ways; there are deities (of similar powers and insight), etc., they will say, etc. (the same); thus he makes the world his authority and superior, and puts away demerit and (so on). Hence 'Ottappam' is said to rest on 'world-authority.'

(3) 'Hiri' is of the nature of modesty, that is, modest shame; and 'Ottappam' of the nature of fear, that is, fear of hell. These are both shown in the avoiding of sin. Just as a well-born man, performing any of the offices of nature, if he sees a person towards whom modesty is due, feels ashamed and confused; exactly in the same way one man abstains from sin from a sense of modesty towards himself. Another well-born man abstains from sin from fear of hell. This is to be illustrated thus. Suppose there are two balls of iron, one of which is cold and smeared with filth, the other hot and fiery. In that case a wise man will decline to take up the one from disgust at the filth, and the other from fear of being burnt. Here, it is to be understood that the declining to take up the cold but filthy ball is like abstaining from sin from sense of modesty towards one's self; declining the hot ball from fear of being burnt is like abstaining from sin from fear of hell.

'Hiri' marks sense of propriety, 'Ottappam' quickness to see the danger of sin. Both these also are displayed in the avoiding sin. One man, by the four considerations of greatness of rank, greatness of learn-

ing, greatness of inheritance, greatness of religious character, excites within himself the inward sense of propriety and abstains from sin. The other, by the four fears, of his own reproach, of the reproach of others, of punishment, of birth in the unhappy conditions, excites in himself 'Ottappam,' the sign of a quick sense of the danger of sin.

'At this point,' ends the Commentator, 'the four kinds of greatness and the four kinds of fear ought to be explained in detail as they stand in the Anguttara Atthakathá'—into which we cannot follow him.

A final quotation shall be one which, from the nature of the text commented on, ought to give an instructive summary of Buddhist principles.

On the words, 'He preaches a doctrine lovely in the beginning, lovely in the midst, and lovely in the end,' the Commentator writes:[1]

'This means that the Buddha not only preaches, because of his compassion for (all) beings, an incomparable doctrine of bliss enjoyed through detachment, but, whether he preaches little or much, preaches it in the method of lovely beginning, and so on; in the beginning he makes what he preaches lovely, good, faultless, and in the middle, and in the end, too, he makes what he preaches lovely, good, and faultless.

'This "beginning, middle, and end" applies to preaching, and also to religion itself. In the case of a sermon which consists of a four-line stanza, the first line is the beginning, the next two lines the middle,

[1] Sumang Vil. p. 15.

and the last the end. In a Sutta of one topic, the introduction is the beginning; "thus he said" is the end: all between these two, the middle. In a Sutta of several topics, the first topic is the beginning, the last topic the end, those between, one or two or many, the middle. In religion itself, conduct, meditation, insight, is the beginning; and it is said, "And what is the beginning of good principles?" "Pure conduct and right belief." In the words, "The Buddha, monks, has attained the perfect knowledge of the Middle Way;" the Noble Way is called the middle, and the fruit and Nirvana are the end. In the saying, "Therefore, Brahman, a religious life is the final good," the fruit is the end. "Men live, reverend Visákha, the religious life, of which Nirvana is the basis, Nirvana the aim, Nirvana the end"—here Nirvana is said to be the end. In the text, it is the beginning, middle, end of *preaching* that is meant. And the Buddha, in preaching the doctrine, at the beginning preaches Conduct, in the middle the Way, at the end Nirvana. Therefore it is said, "He preaches a doctrine lovely in the beginning, lovely in the midst, and lovely in the end." Hence another preacher, when he expands the doctrine, at the beginning should be set forth Conduct, in the middle should dwell upon the Way, and in the end Nirvana. This is the system of preaching.'

The Visuddhi Magga—or, as it is more often written, Visuddhimárga (in Sinhalese shape Márggaya)—is not a commentary on any text, but claims

to be a compendium of the whole Buddha system; conduct, meditation,[1] contemplation, the elements of being, the regions of sense, the material elements, the Senses, the Truths, the Chain of Causations, and the rest.[2] The particular Commentaries constantly refer to it. It is considered to be the one book from which the Buddhist system can be best learnt. A famous Elder, Dhammapála, who is said to have lived not long after Buddhaghosha, added a Pali 'Tika,' or explanation; and late in the thirteenth century the learned Sinhalese king, Pandita Parakrama, wrote a word-for-word interpretation ('sanné') in Sinhalese.[3]

I have said that the Commentaries, as far as I know (but my acquaintance with them is very imperfect), show no clear indications of a Sinhalese origin; but the Visuddhi Magga does. The following story, which stands in the Pali text, is sufficient proof of it: 'An Elder named Tissa, who lived on the Cetiya Hill (Mihintale), was going forth thence to Anuradhapura on his begging rounds. A young bride, who had quarrelled with her husband, was coming out of Anuradhapura in the early morning, to go to the house of her kinsfolk, gaily dressed, and adorned like a celestial maiden. Seeing the Elder on the road, she

[1] *Samadhi*, more properly, the condition of tranquillity which is necessary to meditation.

[2] I have translated the summary given by the learned Sinhalese editor, in his preface to Visudha Marga, Colombo, 1887-1891.

[3] Called 'Parumattha Manjusa.' The title of Pandit was given to several Parakramas, but it is Parakrama the Second, to whom, in the Mahavansa, the full title, 'the omniscient Pandit of the Kali Yuga age,' is given. His date, according to the usually received chronology, is A.D. 1240-1275.

laughed a loud laugh in the wantonness of her heart. The Elder looked round to see what it was. He saw her teeth; they suggested to him the thought of (the thirty-two) impurities of (the body); and he at once attained rahatship. So it is said:

' "When he saw her teeth (bones)
He followed up in thought the hint;
And then and there the wise Elder
Attained to rahatship."

Her husband came along the road after her, and, when he saw the Elder, he asked: "Did you see a woman, sir?" The Elder replied:

' "I know not whether woman
Or man it was who went by;
But a bundle of bones
Is going along the high-road." '

The Visuddhi Magga, so far as I have read it, adds little or nothing to the Pitakas, but aims at a systematic arrangement of their contents. The im perfection of even this arrangement illustrates the extreme difficulty of bringing each part of the system into logical co-ordination with the rest. In the details, the methods of antithesis and division are carried to their utmost degree. On the basis of the classification conduct, meditation, insight (or virtue, tranquillity, contemplation), the author says, for instance: 'Conduct saves from hell, meditation from the elements of desire, insight from all existence. Conduct corrects vice, meditation corrects lust, insight corrects error. Conduct is the virtue of the beginner (sotágámi), meditation of the advanced (anágámi), insight of the perfect (rahat). The qualities of conduct (sila) are

grouped in so many couples, so many triplets, and so many sets of four.

The merits of the work, besides its completeness, are, I think, its conciseness and great perspicuity. The Pali is generally easier to understand than the commentary.

Of the series of dialogues which I have already mentioned as being older than Buddhaghosha, the 'Questions of King Milinda,' a very interesting account has been given, with a translation of half the work, by Professor Rhys Davids in vol. xxxv. of the *Sacred Books of the East.* Milinda is but an adapted form of the name of Menander, the Greek king of Baktria, who reigned 'probably from about 140 to 115 or even 110 B.C.,' and it is he who asks the questions or propounds the difficulties which are solved by an Elder named Nágasena. How long after his time the work was written there is no means of exactly ascertaining, but Professor Rhys Davids thinks it was 'at, or a little after, the Christian era.' From such geographical allusions as the work contains, it appears to have been written in the far north-west of India, or in the Panjab itself.

This early and important exposition of Buddhist principles seems to have been little known during most of the centuries of its existence. It is quoted, and with the greatest respect, by Buddhaghosha, but there is no certain trace[1] of it from that date until it

[1] Unless it can be traced as referred to in a work written in Ceylon about, it is thought, the twelfth century.

was translated into Sinhalese by order of Kirti Sri Raja Sinha in the eighteenth century.

'The Questions of Milinda' is important for the testimony which it gives to the early completion of the Buddhist canon. The writer refers to so large a proportion of the canonical books, quoting them abundantly, and naming them both by the large collections, and by the separate books, that it may be confidently asserted that he had in his hand the Pitakas as we have them now.

In fact, the book is founded and modelled on the Pitakas. Not only does it consist of a series of dialogues constructed to explain points in the sacred text or arising out of it, but both the dramatic setting of these dialogues, and, for the most part, the arguments which they enforce, are taken from the Pitakas. The dramatic setting, though there is not much of it, is remarkably lively and graceful; but it is taken almost entirely from the older texts. The phrases and entire paragraphs, scenes, and events, are reproduced almost word for word. The King says: It is a fine night,—what learned teacher shall we converse with? The monks are entertained in vast companies, or go out singly to beg,—greetings are exchanged and conversions take place. The arguments and the innumerable similes are often developments of what has been briefly said in the Pitakas, or run on similar lines. But while every page recalls the canonical books, the 'Questions' has a vigour and variety which would justify the praise of originality. Pro-

fessor Rhys Davids says: 'I venture to think that the "Questions of Milinda" is undoubtedly the masterpiece of Indian prose; and indeed is the best book of its class, from a literary point of view, that had then been produced in any country.' The first part of this sentence I will not dispute, and I do not know how much may be meant by the latter part. But the reader who should expect from the Milindapanho, the humour, the human interest, the charm, or the inspiration of Plato would prepare for himself a cruel disappointment.

Of the use of this book by Buddhaghosha there are, I think, more traces than the actual quotations; and it is a remarkable fact that of the two companion stanzas, which according to the Mahavansa were given to Buddhaghosha to be the foundation on which he erected his Visuddhi Márga, one is the first stanza (of that class) that occurs in the 'Questions of Menander.'[1]

As a specimen of the topics discussed, I select one which touches on a difficulty that may even have occurred to the reader.[2]

[THE BUDDHA'S LAST ILLNESS.]

'Venerable Nágasena, it was said by the Elders who held the recitation:

[1] Since writing this sentence I have seen that it has been anticipated by Professor Rhys Davids in his 'Addenda.'

[2] The translation is that of Professor Rhys Davids, *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xxxv. p. 242.

"When he had eaten Cunda's alms,
The coppersmith's,—thus have I heard,—
The Buddha felt that sickness dire,
That sharp pain even unto death."

'And afterwards the Blessed One said: These two offerings of food, Ananda, equal, of equal fruit, and of equal result, are of much greater fruit and much greater result than any others. Now if sharp sickness fell upon the Blessed One, Nagasena, after he had partaken of Cunda's alms, and sharp pains arose within him even unto death, then that other statement must be wrong. But if that is right then the first must be wrong. How could that alms, Nagasena, be of great fruit when it turned to poison, gave rise to disease, put an end to the period of his then existence, took away his life? Explain this to me to the refutation of the adversaries. The people are in bewilderment about this, thinking that the dysentery must have been caused by his eating too much, out of greediness.'

'The Blessed One said: O King, that there were two almsgivings equal, of equal fruit, and equal result, and of much greater fruit, and much greater result than any others,—that which when a Tathagata has partaken of he attains to supreme and perfect Buddhahood (enlightenment), and that when he has partaken of which, he passes away by that utter passing away in which nothing whatever remains behind. For that alms is full of virtue, full of advantage. The gods, O King, shouted in joy and gladness at the thought—"This is the last meal the Tathagata

will take," and communicated a divine power of nourishment to that tender pork. And that was itself in good condition, light, pleasant, full of flavour, and good for digestion. It was not because of it that any sickness fell upon the Blessed One, but it was because of the extreme weakness of his body, and because of the period of life he had to live having been exhausted that the disease arose, and grew worse and worse, just as when, O King, an ordinary fire is burning, if fresh fuel be supplied, it will burn up still more; or as when a stream is flowing along as usual, if a heavy rain falls it will become a mighty river with a great rush of water; or as when the body is of its ordinary girth, if more food be eaten, it becomes broader than before. So this was not, O King, the fault of the food that was presented, and you cannot impute any harm to it.'

'But, venerable Nagasena, why is it that those two gifts of food are so specially meritorious?' 'Because of the attainment of the exalted conditions which resulted from them.' 'Of what conditions, Nagasena, are you speaking?' 'Of the attainment of the nine successive states which were passed through at first in one order, and then in the reverse order.'

'It was on two days, was it not, Nagasena, that the Tathagata attended to those conditions in the highest degree?' 'Yes, O King.'

'It is a most wonderful thing, Nagasena, and a most strange, that of all the great and glorious gifts which were bestowed upon our Blessed One, not one can be compared with these two almsgivings. Most

marvellous is it, that even as those nine successive conditions are glorious, even so are those gifts made, by their glory, of greater fruit, and of greater advantage than any others. Very good, Nagasena! That is so, and I accept it as you say.'

Such is a slight sketch of the works associated with the name of Buddhaghosha. I had hoped to deal more fully with this secondary Pali literature, and to have acquired enough knowledge of the old Sinhalese treatises and poems to give some account of them also. But I find it impossible to touch the latter subject, without too long delaying the rest of the book. With much regret I leave this palpable gap unfilled.

NOTE.—QUESTIONS OF MILINDA.

THIS book bears clear internal evidence of having been written in that part of the world where Menander reigned.

The historical matter which it contains is as follows:—The king's birthplace is said to have been the district of Kalasi, in the island of Alasanda; a statement is made about the contemporary king of 'China,' which implies that he was a Buddhist; three allusions are made to common Buddhist tradition, about the great Asoka, about a battle in the time of his grandfather Candagutta, and about a king of Kalinga.

The only definite geographical statement is about the distance of Sagala from Kalasi (200 yojanas), and from Kashmir (12 yojanas). But the less definite geographical indications are conclusive. In the enumeration of countries (there are two such in the book) where the purpose is to express 'any countries whatever,'

no acquaintance is implied with any but the north and north-east of India. A few more distant places, south and east, are mentioned as ports to which a ship might sail.[1]

Other hints are decisive against a Ceylon authorship, and in favour of a North Indian. The Himalaya and the Ganges are familiarly spoken of; ice is mentioned; and the sun is said not to be so fierce in summer on account of clouds. Among animals there are references, not only to the lion, tiger, and rhinoceros, which are common in the Pitakas, but also to the hyena and the camel.

The Buddhism of this book is substantially that of the Pitakas, with very few indications of any of the later developments of doctrine. Of 'Northern' developments, or of Great and Little 'Vehicles,' there is not a hint.

But the writer does not appear aware of a strongly marked distinction between canonical and non-canonical books. Nor does the word 'Pitaka' occur (I think) in the text itself. It is found in some verses which form the 'heading' of a chapter and are not necessarily contemporary with the text.[2]

For legends and anecdotes, the writer draws largely on traditions such as are contained in the Ceylon commentaries. But to the traditions of Gotama's biography, as I have extracted it from the Pitakas, I have noticed only two things added by the Milinda Questions—and possibly these two may still be in some Pitaka book which I have not read—the statements that Gotama was moved to dissatisfaction with home life by the sight of the 'disfigured seraglio,'[3] and that he was tempted by the promise of universal empire, if he would stay at home, in seven days.

Both in ethical interest and in literary merit the book is very unequal. If it were judged by the well-known dialogue about the king's chariot, it would be much over-rated. It contains few if any other discussions at once so searching, so lively, and so pointed as that, which is the first.

The opening has a picturesque and dramatic setting; but this element soon disappears; in the greater part of the book it is entirely wanting. In a few instances, King Milinda is not contented with the first explanation, and presses home his difficulty with genuine force; in one or two Nagasena admits that no answer can be given, rather in the tone in which parents tell their children 'not

[1] See Rhys Davids, *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xxxv. p. xliv.

[2] Trenckner's edition, p. 348.

[3] *Ib.* p. 285.

to ask silly questions.' Far oftener there is really no dialogue after the first question; sometimes the original question merely introduces a very tedious lecture, which consists, in the worst instances, of an enumeration of the twenty-eight this and the eighteen that, and the ten forms of the other. In the best instances, the difficulty started is a real one, such as, why the consequences of ill deeds are so much more apparent than those of good (iv. 33), or whether any death is untimely (iv. 36). Sometimes it is a difficulty arising out of Buddhist traditions, such as, How could it be right for Vessantara to give his children to be slaves (iv. 31)? Why did not the Buddha perform a miracle for his own convenience (iv. 7)? How came he, after preparing for Buddhahood for so many lives, to think, when he had attained it, of not teaching (*ib.*)?—several, like this last, being met only by evasion. Some of the questions are merely verbal; some absurd, as, Why, if there are demons, do we never see or smell their corpses? and a few quite irrelevant, such as, How are dreams produced? or Why is the sun not equally fierce at all seasons? Two treat of revolting topics with shocking want of reserve, but none have any impure tendency.

As for originality, it lies almost entirely in the treatment; for most, if not all, of the arguments and illustrations are enlargements of hints derived from the older books. But the treatment is intelligent; in favourable contrast with the later Suttas, and rich in a certain kind of force and eloquence. The supply of words is astonishing, and takes the reader's breath away.

For the characteristic of the Pali style, increasing as the literature grew, was the accumulation of synonyms for each word, of parallel phrases for each clause, and of rival illustrations for each simile. One consequence of this characteristic is, that the style is most effective when an accumulation of effects has to be described; as when drops are gathered into streams, and streams meet in rivers, and rivers pour into the sea. An eminent and, I think, really magnificent instance of this is the description of the earthquake which ensued on Vessantara's celebrated donation.[1]

As a favourable specimen, remarkable for the moral importance of the question attacked as well as for the stern severity of the answer, and for a liveliness of dialogue above the average, I give (in an abridgment) what follows:[2]—

[1] Questions of Milinda, *Sacred Books of the East*, xxxv. p. 175.
[2] Milinda Panho, iv. 18, p. 255.

'Suppose a layman has fallen into one of the four great faults which in a monk are irrecoverable, and afterwards enters the Community; and suppose he does not know that he ever was guilty of such a fault—is spiritual attainment possible to that man?'

'No; because the essential condition of spiritual attainment has been destroyed in him.'

'But your teaching says, that one of the great obstacles to attainment is remorse. Now this man has no remorse; he is calm; why is attainment impossible to him?'

'Just as a seed, which would come up well in rich, well-ploughed soil, cannot come up on stony and rocky ground, because in the latter the (vivifying) cause is wanting; or, as a stick, which can stand on the earth, cannot stand in the air, because the (supporting) cause is wanting, etc. etc., so the necessary condition of spiritual attainment has been destroyed in the man who has committed one of the irrecoverable faults.'

There is a genuine resemblance here to the Gospel Parable of the Sower. But the finest touch of ethical teaching, I think, is in the description of faith. Just as, when a stream is running high, ordinary men stand on the bank afraid to try to cross, then comes a strong and active man and leaps it at a bound; so he who has faith aspires and leaps up to attainments which to others seem impossible, and not only secures them himself but arouses the aspirations of others.

CHAPTER XXV

GENERAL SKETCH OF CEYLON HISTORY FROM BUDDHAGHOSHA TO PARAKRAMA.

I PROPOSE in this chapter to review very briefly the history of Ceylon, as it is told in the Mahavansa, from the fourth to the end of the twelfth century, in order to extract from it what may be learnt about the relation of the Buddhist Community to the national government; about the different sects which existed within the Community; about the admixture of Hinduism with Buddhism, and whatever other changes the system may have undergone.

The brilliant period, which saw the work of Buddhaghosha and the conclusion of the original part of the Mahavansa, was followed by a time of depression and defeat. A series of Tamil usurpers reigned over Ceylon, and the sacred edifices fell into decay, till a restorer of the national independence appeared in Dhatusena (A.D. 463). Amid the lists of the great tanks which he made for irrigation and of the dagabas which he repaired or built, occurs a feature which deserves special notice. He erected, we are told, an image of Metteyya (Maitri), the coming Buddha. This is the first mention of any

erection for the cultus of this personage, though he is not seldom referred to by the historian; and King Dutthagamini had a special devotion to him, and is to be—when the time comes—his chief disciple.[1] He is often mentioned in later books, and is even now often on the lips of Ceylon Buddhists as a kind of ideal; but I suspect he is borrowed from the northern school, and his cultus has never taken root in Ceylon.

The violence and inhuman cruelty of some kings, and the meritorious acts of others occupy most of the succeeding chapters of the chronicle. We read of encouragement given to literature by the younger Mogallana (540 A.D.) and by Aggabodhi (560 A.D.), the former himself a poet; and of a literary controversy 'with the Vetulla heretics' in the latter's reign. It would appear that in the century 540-640 the native kings were strong, and the native religion prosperous; though dangerous alliance with the Tamils, who were even brought over to help the Sinhalese kings to keep their own subjects in order, was preparing the way for the renewal of their ascendency. The history of this and the following three centuries contains a great deal to interest the Sinhalese antiquarian, and some points, presently to be touched on, that illustrate the influence of Hinduism on the Buddhism of Ceylon. But there are not many passages so touching as that which describes[2] the dutiful love and reverence shown to his mother by a later Aggabodhi (A.D. 816).

[1] Mahavansa, xxxi.

[2] *Ib.* xlix. li. etc.

'He was constant in his attendance on his mother, both by day and night; and he was wont daily to wait on her betimes and anoint her head with oil, and cleanse her body, and purge the nails of her fingers, and dress her in clean and soft clothing. . . . He made offerings of flowers and perfumes to her as at a shrine, and then bowed himself before her three times. . . . Afterwards he fed her from his own hands with dainty food, and himself ate the remnants, whereof he scattered a portion on his own head . . . he laid out her bed carefully with his own hands. . . . And when he departed from the bed-chamber he turned not his back upon her, but stepped back noiselessly till he could not be seen. . . . In this selfsame manner did he serve his mother all the days of his life.'

'On one occasion, when he spake disdainfully to his servant, and called him a slave, it grieved him so that he himself sought to obtain his servant's forgiveness.'

We find something to admire in the historian's flattery of kings, when qualities like these are chosen for praise.

Soon after this king's reign the seat of government was moved from Anuradhapura to Polonnaruwa (in Pali, Pulatthi), a spot further to the east, where still are seen, deep in the forest, ruins even more beautiful than those of the older city. It was virtually a retreat before the growing power of the Tamils, who were advancing from the West;[1] and although

[1] Mahavansa, l. 12, etc.

the chronicle is still filled with the great deeds of the kings, it is clear that they had a constant struggle to maintain their thrones, and were not seldom dethroned, till in the tenth and eleventh centuries king after king asserted his claim, only to be defeated and slain. It is to be noticed that a great many of them committed suicide on the field of battle; an act which the Buddhist chronicler nowhere, I think, condemns.

At length, exactly at the date when William the Conqueror was taking possession of England, Vijaya Bahu recovered the Sinhalese throne, and established a short-lived prosperity. His restoration of the Buddhist Community, which the Tamil conquest had almost extinguished, forms one of the marked epochs of our history. But after this brilliant episode, civil war and foreign invasion had their way again; and it was nearly another century before the royal race was again triumphant, in the person of the illustrious Parakrama.

The story of this hero, in the Mahavansa, almost deserves to be called an epic poem. I sketch the first portion of it at some length, partly for the sake of the likeness which it bears to those conventional descriptions of heroic youth which appear in the later lives of the Buddha.

His aged parents had been lamenting their sad lot in having no son to raise them from the obscurity into which they had sunk (for King Manabharana enjoyed but a very limited dominion in the southern part of Ceylon), when a glorious divine being ap-

peared to the father and foretold the birth of an illustrious son. To both the parents there appeared, on one night, the vision of a beautiful elephant entering the chamber of the queen; and the household Brahman announced that this portended the birth of a son, who would have all the marks of wealth and fortune. The delighted king had 'pirit'[1] said by monks, and Soma rites performed by his household Brahmans, and applied himself diligently to works of charity and religion. When at length the boy was born, nature rejoiced; cool winds blew everywhere, and all was gladness. And when the Brahmans had examined the marks of the child, they pronounced that he was capable of subduing to his rule not Lanka only but all Jambudwipa.

The young prince grew up, and was distinguished in all manly and royal accomplishments, riding and the use of the bow, and the rest; but what ruled in his heart was the love of glory, and the proud determination to bring all Lanka under one rule again. He thought of the achievements of the Bodhisat, recorded in the Ummagga Jataka, etc., and those of the heroes of the Ramayana and Mahabharata. 'Life is indeed a boon,' he said, 'to those who are able to do such mighty deeds above the common. Born of Khattiya race, if I do not something worthy of Khattiya heroism, vain will my birth be.'[2] Fearing that in the

[1] The recitation of certain Suttas which speak specially of domestic duty and domestic happiness: it is a kind of benediction, but in some cases a mere charm.

[2] Mahavansa, lxiv. 48.

pleasures of royal state his enthusiasm might fade, and determining to learn the condition of the country and the enemy's strength, he stole forth by night from his father's house to explore the 'Upper Provinces.'

His adventures in this roving life are told at great length, and not without humour; a gay temper and love of fun and amusement being part of his character. He employed a variety of spies, some pretending to be monks, some snake-charmers, physicians, pedlars, or dancers; and by their means got to know the dispositions of all classes and all individuals in the land. By many wonderful displays of strength and courage he taught the people to look upon him as invincible; and meanwhile he trained and organised a system of local officers and captains, and collected material of war.

On the death of his uncle, he became ruler of so much of Ceylon as had belonged to him (apparently what is now Saffragam and part of the Western Province), and set himself to strengthen it to the utmost, with a view to recovering the rest. To this part of his career are attributed also vast works of irrigation, and the bringing under cultivation of a great quantity of land, by which he greatly increased the resources of his country. He is represented as biding his time, training the noble youths, exercising his troops, and amassing immense stores of money and of gems.

After such ample preparation the hero entered on a long course of battles, in which he gained possession of the north-central part of the island, especially of

the royal city of Polonnaruwa and the ruined Anuradhapura; quieted the disaffected portions of the South; expelled the Tamils, and carried his triumphant arms into South India itself, and to still more distant countries. Wherever he went his enemies faded away before his victorious drums as the glow-worm at the light of morning. He consumed all before him as a fire advances through the forest. But in his successes he acted with generosity, and showed the utmost deference to the religious Community. At their request he gave back, on one occasion, to its former ruler the kingdom which he had made his own.

Having attained to the summit of glory, he employed his power not only for the establishment and purification of the Buddhist system, and for the erection of innumerable temples, dagabas, and monasteries; but also for the construction of gigantic works of irrigation, and the wise and beneficent government of his people. Readers would be tempted to discard as altogether extravagant the multitude and the extent of the buildings, and the artificial lakes and channels, which the historian attributes to Parakrama, were not the record sufficiently attested by the remains which exist of those gigantic works—works which it has taxed the resources of the English Government even partly to restore.

Having thus reviewed the general history of this period, I will now put together some of the chief intimations which it contains of the internal history of the Community.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE COMMUNITY IN THE MIDDLE AGES

IT is difficult to extract from the Mahavansa a history of Ceylon Buddhism, as a whole, not because the chronicle is in substance untrustworthy, but because its point of view is exclusive. All is written from the point of view of the royal court, and of that dominant branch of the Buddhist Community which is called the Great Monastery or Maha Vihara.

Of the conduct of any laymen but kings and their generals, the Mahavansa gives no picture; and as the kings are the only actors, the givers of all alms, the builders of all temples, we do not learn how far the people at large were influenced. The Community is represented as having been replenished and fed, not by the devotion or by the alms of the people, but by the gigantic gifts of kings, and by the revenues of land assigned by kings for the support of monks. It does not follow, because the historian makes no mention of any zeal but that of the court, that no other zeal existed; but we are left to guess it. On the one hand, such displays of royal enthusiasm, and such magnificent holidays and pageants as are the historian's favourite theme, cannot have failed to secure some

of the popular affection for the system which they adorned. On the other hand, the complete collapse of the religious system, which seems to have followed every royal defection or Tamil usurpation, indicates that slight hold on the heart of the people which one would expect to be the result of excessive dependence on a court.

And even for the affairs of the Community, the authority of the Mahavansa is limited by the fact that it is the record, and was for years the 'organ,' of the exclusive Maha Vihara fraternity. Its estimate of the merit of kings, of the prosperity of religion, of the importance of events, is not impartial. It is possible that at times when the Maha Vihara had nothing to record, there may have been signal triumphs in the 'Abhayagiri' or the 'Jetavana' fraternity. Those centres may possibly have cherished customs or produced literature of which no report has remained. This exclusiveness must be taken into account, from the date of the first recorded secession, early in the second century B.C., to that of the final re-union of the chief sects at the end of the twelfth century A.D.

But within the restricted field covered from this limited point of view, there is a good deal that is instructive, and that deserves a fuller treatment than I can give it here.

The close relations between the court and the monastery have been already alluded to. They are characteristic of Buddhism both in Magadha and in Ceylon.

The power of the kings was exerted not only for the protection of the religion, but also to no small extent for interference in its affairs. Kings are frequently said to have reformed what was defective in the discipline of the Community. Kassapa V., we read, 'purged the religion by enforcing the rules of discipline, and appointed new priests to fill up the vacant places in the Viharas.'[1] And many after him did the same. Many of them even presumed to teach. The same Kassapa was well read in the Three Pitakas, and 'was a preacher of the law as well as a doer.'[2] Sena IV. took his seat on one occasion in the Brazen Palace and 'expounded the Suttanta in the presence of the brethren.'[3] Many kings also held 'councils' in imitation of those which had been held—or were believed to have been held—in ancient days by kings of Magadha.

Side by side with this, the political power of the monks was great, and seems to have increased as time went on. The more illustrious patrons of Buddhism professed themselves the slaves of the Community; repeatedly dedicated themselves and their kingdom to the Buddha; offered to the monks their royal insignia and received them back from them; and sometimes transferred, or pretended to transfer, to the monks for a fixed period all the prerogatives of the throne.[4] It was Sena II., about 866 A.D., who made it a custom for kings to be anointed at the Ruwanweli Dagaba;[5]

[1] Mahavansa, lii. 44.
[2] *Ib.* lii. 82.
[3] *Ib.* liv. 4.
[4] *Ib.* xxxix. 31, etc.
[5] *Ib.* li. 82.

and we afterwards find the monks prominent among those by whom a king is selected.[1]

Long before this the monks had made their religious authority felt by the kings, and punished them for disregarding it. They inflicted on Hatthodátha the 'inversion of the bowl,' the censure which takes away from a layman the privilege of putting alms-food in a monk's bowl; and in a short time he was afflicted with a sore disease and died.[2] Other like warnings are recorded from the speedy death of kings who protected heresy and the like.

It has been intimated already that there existed, during the greater part of the period we are considering, well-marked distinctions between different branches of the Community. These distinctions amounted at times to fierce hostility.

The Great Monastery or Maha Vihara of Anuradhapura was the original foundation of Devanampiya Tissa, who erected for it the Thuparama.[3] For the same monastery, and within its limits, the 'Brazen Palace' and the Ruwanweli (called the great) Dagaba were built by the heroic Dutthagamini; and these three erections are always treated in the Mahavansa as far the most sacred of the Anuradhapura shrines.

The Mahavansa does not allude in the earlier or more nearly contemporary chapters to the secessions which gave rise to the other great 'fraternities;' but at a much later date it is incidentally stated that the

[1] Mahavansa, lxi. 1.
[2] *Ib.* xlv. 35.
[3] See Chapter xxii. p. 319.

Abhayagiri secession came in Vattagamini Abhaya's reign (*c.* 100 B.C.), and that of the Jetavana, an offset from the former, in Mahasena's reign (*c.* 300 A.D.)[1] Vattagamini built the Abhayagiri dagaba, but how far the sects were identified with the shrines whose names they bore is not clear to me.

The secession of the Abhayagiri is said to have been caused by the reception, into the establishment connected with the new dagaba, of the pupil of a monk who had been expelled from the Maha Vihara. This may have been the occasion, but we may suspect a deeper cause. Two facts throw light on it. One is, that the Abhayagiri monks 'taught the Vetulla Pitaka and other writings as the words of Buddha;'[2] the other, that it was at this time that the sacred texts were first committed to writing. The Mahavansa tells us that 'the profoundly wise monks' (doubtless those of the Maha Vihara) 'foreseeing the perdition of the people from the perversion of the true doctrine, assembled; and in order that the religion might endure for ages, recorded the same in books.' If it be the case, as may be inferred from these two passages, that, before the canon was committed to writing in B.C. 90-80, a monastery could still, without altogether ceasing to be a part of the Community, hold a 'Vetulla Pitaka' to be the words of Buddha; and if, as may be less certainly but probably concluded, the Maha Vihara acquired its characteristic position at the date when the 'recording in books' took place,—there is serious

[1] Mahavansa, lxxviii. 21. [2] *Ib.* xxii.

reason to suspect that the final settlement of the canon was much later than tradition allows,—in fact, that it was only finally settled, for the Ceylon school, at the date which is assigned for its committal to writing. But this is a digression.

In Silameghavanna's reign (A.D. 614), the Abhayagiri fraternity were in very bad order; and even after the most wicked had been expelled, it was in vain that the king tried to induce the Maha Vihara monks to observe the fortnightly ceremonies with them. Indeed, through his attempt to do so, being provoked to use hard words of the orthodox monks, and not seeking their forgiveness, he died of a sore disease.[1]

The 'three fraternities,' however, are constantly spoken of as being all tolerated,[2] although that of the Abhayagiri was stigmatized as 'Dhammarucika,' and that of the Jetavana as 'Ságalika.'[3] Parákrama Báhu, as well as Gaja Báhu, treated them all with great respect,[4] and made earnest attempts to unite them.[5] Parakrama settled the divisions which existed within the Maha Vihara itself, and expelled the bad monks; and then it is said that he 'restored unity;' but this was achieved, it would seem, rather by expelling the irreconcileable members of Abhayagiri and Jetavana than by reconciling all. In another place,[6] he is said to have united the two systems (the Maha

[1] Mahavansa, xlv. 75.

[2] *e.g.* by Dhátusena. Mahavansa, xxxviii., and see *ib.* xlix. 88; li. 14; li. 86; lii. 35, etc.

[3] Mahavansa, lii. 17.

[4] *Ib.* lxxi. 328, 335.

[5] *Ib.* lxxviii. 5, 27.

[6] *Ib.* lxxxiv. 9.

Vihara and the non-conformists) by the influence of learned monks brought over from Southern India.

From Parakrama's time onwards, we meet with no more indications of the division. All three establishments, so far as they were localised in Anuradhapura, soon fell into the ruin in which they have only recently been re-discovered.

Besides these 'three fraternities,' we read also of 'forest monks' (Arannikas) and of Pamsukulikas (or 'dust-heap-robe wearers'). The two terms do not seem to refer to the same persons. The term 'forest monks' need mean nothing more distinct than such as had gone out from either monastery to a more secluded life. Such are often alluded to in the Pitaka books. The Pamsukulikas were more definitely a special class. They went out, we read, from the Abhayagiri in the reign of Sena II. (A.D. 866)[1] and no doubt aimed at a greater strictness and closer adherence to the original rule, which prescribed 'dust-heap-robes' as the only essential clothing for the brethren. They were apparently held in great respect, and the peace of their 'sacred forest' was considered inviolable.[2]

All these, though divided, were not treated as heretics; though the Abhayagiri brethren must at times have been little better, for the 'Vetulla heretics' are spoken of with severity about A.D. 570.[3] But the distinction between separation and heresy is recognised in the words which record the thoughts of Parakrama,

[1] Mahavansa, li. 52. [2] *Ib.* liii. 22, etc. [3] *Ib.* xlii. 35.

as he turned to the task of establishing religious unity: 'The religion of the great sage has now for a long time past been shaken by hundreds of heresies, and broken up by reason of the disputes of the Three Fraternities.'[1]

Another and more serious alteration of Buddhism took place gradually and, perhaps, unnoticed,—the intermixture of Hinduism. The historical causes of this are obvious. A large proportion of Hindus from South India became mingled with the population of the island. Tamil soldiers were employed as mercenaries by the native kings; alliances in marriage were repeatedly, almost regularly, made with the royal families of the continent. A succession of Tamil conquerors invaded the island and usurped its thrones. All these things, as well as the ordinary intercourse of commerce between neighbouring countries, familiarised the Sinhalese with the Hinduism of the time. Nor was it altogether an alien influence; for it was on a Hindu foundation, we must remember, that all the social system of the Sinhalese had been originally built, and this Buddhism had not destroyed. Further, it was the profession of Buddhism to be tolerant. Thus what at first was tolerated met with something like a welcome, and in process of time was enforced.

In the old books, 'monks and Brahmans' had sometimes been merely a double description of the same Buddhist brethren. But the two terms are probably meant to be distinguished when we are told of Kassapa III. (A.D. 732) that he 'enforced on laymen

[1] Mahavansa, lxxiii. 56.

and monks and Brahmans the observance of their respective customs.'[1] At any rate, there is no doubt what is referred to when we read that Aggabodhi VII. (A.D. 780), zealous Buddhist as he was, 'repaired many old devalayas' (temples of Hindu deities) 'and caused very valuable images of the gods to be made for them. He gave to the Brahmans the best of such food as was meet for kings,' etc.[2] Sena I. (A.D. 846) gave immense presents to one thousand Brahmans, whom he fed with milk, rice, etc., in polished vessels of gold. Of Vijaya Bahu it is said: 'He took not away that which had been granted aforetime to the devalayas.'[3]

Nor was this an instance merely of toleration. Vira Bahu, the father of Parakrama I., 'caused Brahman priests who were versed in the Vedas and Vedangas to perform the religious rites,' etc.[4] After making great offerings to the three sacred objects of Buddhism, he 'concluded the ceremony with the help of Brahmans,' etc.[5] Parakrama Bahu went further still, for he built, besides all his Buddhist buildings, 'a beautiful house of Vishnu, for the Mantra ceremonies.'[6] And the chronicler, imbued with the same tone, calls a later Parakrama an 'earthly Siva.'[7]

In short, the presence of Brahman ministers and astrologers became, as it had been before Buddhism arose, a necessity of the royal court; and the refer-

[1] Mahavansa, xlviii. 23. [2] *Ib.* xlvii. 143.
[3] *Ib.* lx. 77. *Ib.* lxii. 33, 43.
[5] See also *ib.* lxiv. 14; lxvii. 29. [6] *Ib.* lxxiii. 71. [7] *Ib.* xci.

ences are increasingly frequent to magic and astrology. These had never been successfully discountenanced by Buddhism, but they came more and more to the front.[1]

The period under consideration appears to have witnessed the gradual decline in Ceylon of the institution of the Community of Nuns. In the fabulous description of the days of Dutthagamini and Vattagamini (first and second centuries B.C.) the nuns are constantly mentioned as attending, and as being provided for, in enormous numbers, bearing no inconsiderable proportion to those of the monks. On these legends little can be founded, except that the institution was believed some centuries later to have been flourishing in those earlier days. But much later on, the notices of the female Community are specific. Aggabodhi II.'s queen became a nun, and he built a convent for her (*c.* A.D. 600).[2] Jetthatissa's queen retired to a convent (*c.* 623 A.D.), and became a 'preacher, perfect in the Abhidhamma and the Commentaries.'[3] Convents for nuns were built by Mahinda I. (A.D. 738),[4] who made his daughter take the robes; by the queen of Dappula II. (A.D. 807);[5] by Hangasena, a captain of Kassapa's (A.D. 912),[6] when nuns were placed in charge of the Bo-tree itself; and by the wife of the Senápati under Kassapa IV. (A.D. 939).[7]

After these dates we hear little or nothing more

[1] Mahavansa, lvii. 7, 48; lix. 34; lxii. 15, etc.
[2] *Ib.* xlii. 47.
[3] *Ib.* xliv. 114.
[4] *Ib.* xlviii. 36.
[5] *Ib.* xlix. 25.
[6] *Ib.* lii. 24.
[7] *Ib.* lii. 63; see liv. 47, etc.

of nuns or convents. They are conspicuous by their absence from the institutions of the great Parakrama.[1] And if there is one reference to the 'five ranks'[2] (monks, nuns, novices, lay men, lay women), this is probably the conventional use of an old expression. When the ranks are expressly enumerated, only four are mentioned, nuns being omitted.[3]

Having altogether died out in the decay from which the Parakramas rescued Buddhism, this institution was not included in their revival, and never again obtained a footing in Ceylon.

[1] Mahavansa, lxxiii. 74, 138; lxxx., 35; lxxxi 46.
[2] *Ib.* lxxxi. 68.
[3] *Ib.* lxxxiv. 20.

CHAPTER XXVII

FROM PARAKRAMA TO THE ARRIVAL OF THE DUTCH

WE have seen that a great revival, both of the national independence and of the Buddhist religion, was begun by Vijaya Bahu in the eleventh century (A.D. 1065), and carried to completion in the twelfth (A.D. 1164) by the great Parakrama. But the prosperity which the latter attained continued but a little while. With the history of his achievements, no less than eighteen chapters of the Mahavansa are occupied; but the short chapter which follows these is entitled 'The Reigns of Sixteen Kings,' and describes a pitiable course of disaster and disgrace.

The great monarch's nephew, an accomplished prince, was murdered after a reign of one year; and the throne was seized by one adventurer after another. Some of them are credited with the erection of sacred buildings; but their opportunities must have been small, for the Tamils were continually coming down upon them, and after a few vicissitudes utterly defeated the Sinhalese, and overran the whole country. 'Like the giants of Mara, they destroyed

the kingdom and the religion of the land. Alas! alas!' cries the historian.

This state of desolation lasted till about 1240 A.D., when, after a second Vijaya Bahu, a second Parakrama came to the throne. His record is an echo of the earlier hero's fame. Splendid things are said of him, but his greatness was displayed in a diminished domain. The pressure of the Tamils, who were no longer invaders but occupants of the northern part of the island, had by this time all but finally excluded the native kings from their ancient splendid homes in Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa or Pulatthi. The second Parakrama set up his throne and the shrine of the sacred Tooth—just recovered from the hiding-place in which it had been buried during the Tamil inroads — at Dambadeniya, much further south, between Kurunegala and Negombo. Thence he removed the Tooth with great pomp to his own native place, Sirivaddhanapura.

This name belonged in after centuries to Kandy, and it has long been the received opinion, that Kandy represents the Sirivaddhanapura of Parakrama the Second. This opinion has lately been shown to be erroneous. Kandy was probably not founded till nearly three centuries later (by Vira Vikkama, A.D. 1542), and the Sirivaddhana of Parakrama II. was a place of only temporary importance about seven miles from Dambadeniya.

But the brilliant terms in which it is described certainly favour the old opinion. I select some of the

chief features from Mr. Vijesinhe's translation of the Mahavansa, chapter lxxxv.[1] 'The city consisted of stately houses and open halls, of high walls and gates;' and was adorned with Bo-trees, shrines, and dagabas, groves, and image-houses. The Tooth was carried to it in procession from Dambadeniya, the whole road being strewn with fine sand, and lined with plantain-trees and flags, and jars full of flowers. All along the way there were royal arches at every five cubits; at every ten a cloth arch; and at every hundred a 'stately house of great size, consisting of three stories and lofty spires, and containing images of the supreme Buddha—all finished with paintings of exceeding great beauty.'

Any one who has seen an approach decorated in the beautiful Sinhalese fashion can recognise it exactly, if he will look at the above description through a magnifying glass reversed. The 'stately house of great size,' with its three stories and lofty spires, is the 'gedigé' (or pandal) that we know so well; and why should not the historian, here and throughout the Mahavansa, describe all that he admires from flags and plantains to royal assemblies, through his magnifying glass, and glorify a common scene?

All the inhabitants of Ceylon were summoned to attend; and come they did in their best garments, with flowers of the jasmine and the champak and the

[1] The learned translator will forgive me for noticing that, by his insertion, in the first sentence of the chapter, of the words 'for its scenery' he has unconsciously favoured identification with Kandy. Mr. Vijesinhe writes: 'A city that could not be compared for its scenery;' but the Pali has 'incomparable' alone.

iron wood to offer to the Tooth and to the Bowl. Innumerable ornaments were carried in procession. The Vihara was adorned outside with painted arches, with moving images of Brahma and various gods, whose arms moved; with moving figures of horses prancing and great elephants, and 'divers other shows of this kind which delight the world, and are used at feasts.'

We need not inquire whether the ancients possessed a knowledge, now lost, of automatic machinery. Have we not seen the likenesses of pigeons, and even of dolls and of horses, come out when strings were pulled, and flutter over the heads of royal visitors, even in these degenerate days?

Yellow-robed monks meanwhile, with beautiful fans, sat in various places in pulpits reverently placed for them and preached the good law; and cries of 'Sádhu'[1] went up on every side. And all night long innumerable myriads of lamps with perfumed oil made the whole land shine like a starry sky. Dancers and singers and the blasts of musical instruments added to the gaiety of the scene; and the crowds, with 'pleasant shouts went hither and thither, viewing all things with admiration.'

The unusual magnificence with which the historian describes this place is probably accounted for by its having been the birthplace of his king. He was probably a contemporary, and little knew how short-lived the glories of that Sirivaddhanapura would be.

[1] 'Good,' the Buddhist equivalent at once of 'Amen' and of 'Hurrah!'

The extent of this king's actual dominion in the west and south of the island may be inferred from the record of his erecting temples at Kurunegala, at Bentota, and at Dondra, as well as at Dambadeniya. He went also on pilgrimage to Samantakuta, now called Adam's Peak.[1]

In an address to his sons he is represented as claiming to have made the whole island his own, but his dominion over the north and east must have been merely nominal. By his minister, he visited all parts of Maya (the west and south), and constructed bridges and roads. In particular, he improved the path to Adam's Peak. He was a man of great learning and literary ability, and was called by the Community 'the omniscient Pandit of the Kali Age.'

To the successors of this king many great donations are attributed, but their power was weakened by renewed Tamil conquests; and the Tooth itself was for a time a prisoner in India. After it was recovered, Parakrama Bahu IV. set it up with new honours, and instituted a ritual for it. In his time, about 1300 A.D., the Játakas were translated into Sinhalese.

Over the next two centuries our history passes lightly. The national independence was more and more curtailed, and the national religion lost support, till about 1550 A.D. King Rájasíha apostatised from Buddhism, established Saivism as the Court religion,

[1] It is natural for the Mahavansa to say that he went there 'with his fourfold army.' Would you have a king go alone?

and persecuted the Community. About the same time (a little earlier) the Portuguese established a footing in the island, and the period of European and Christian influence began.

To the Portuguese a very bad character indeed is given in the Mahavansa. 'They were all of them wicked unbelievers, cruel, and hard of heart. . . They broke into towns and temples and image-houses, and destroyed Bodhi-trees and images of Buddha. They destroyed the country and the religion thereof, and built forts in divers places, and maintained continual warfare.' Their advance against Kandy compelled the king, for the safety of the sacred Tooth, to fly; but they were driven back; and after many battles the assistance of the Dutch was invited, and the Portuguese were compelled to withdraw. The Sinhalese king—such was the native view of the event—established the people of 'Olanda' in places bordering the sea, that they might guard Lanka and hinder the enemy.

How the Olandas in their turn became as bad as the Portuguese will appear in the sequel.

NOTE.—ROBERT KNOX.

IT was during the latter parts of the reign of Rajasinha II., from 1660 to 1680 A.D., that the Englishman Robert Knox was detained, not a prisoner, but under observation, in the Kandian territory. As a personal record, relating with the simplest modesty, his own hardships and dangers, his courage in making the best of his position, the integrity with which he maintained his Christian moral and religious standard under circumstances so trying, and

finally the indomitable perseverance by which he at last made good his escape, his *Relation of the Island of Ceylon* is an extremely interesting book. As a sketch of the country and its customs, it is distinguished by an accuracy and sureness of observation which few professed travellers have equalled. And it may be added that while Knox's veracity is abundantly confirmed by what residents in the island now see, his testimony gives, on the other side, general confirmation, when due allowance has been made for national pride, to the statements of the Mahawansa. The reader will not complain if I give a somewhat fuller account of his book than my own subject would actually require. He describes the king in terms less favourable than those of the native historian ; but one who reads between the lines can see the same strongly marked character in both. Rajasinha was a man of that excessive and revolting degree of pride which is to be found only in tyrants, a man of overbearing self-will and diabolical cruelty,—yet not altogether destitute of the capacities, if he had not the virtues, of a ruler. Under the pressure of constant invasions and defeats by the Portuguese, and of rebellion among his own people he seems to have had a policy, and to have acted with constant shrewdness and occasional courage. He was severe on any injustice on the part of his officers, and on immorality in any but himself. Although his reign was one long watch against conspiracy, he appears to have been as much feared as hated. He had a contempt for those over whom he tyrannised, and a certain admiration for Europeans, of whom, both Portuguese and Dutch, he had a considerable number in his employment. He had also Caffre guards whom he trusted more than his own people. In matters of religion he was tolerant, and inclined to favour Christianity. He was himself the son of a ‘ Christian ’ mother.—His father was or had been a Buddhist monk. A Jesuit priest, with whom Knox was well acquainted, seems to have lived an easy life on the outskirts of his court. The Dutch by flattering his vanity with inflated titles, and by protesting to be only his slaves and messengers and watchmen along his shores, easily secured impunity for their ever-advancing encroachments on the maritime parts of what he called his dominions.

But in fact the country in Rajasinha's days had been impoverished and in parts desolated by Portuguese and Dutch incursions. Kandy was poor and half ruined, having been often burnt by the Portuguese. Badulla was in the same or a worse condition,—all the towns were

very small and desolate. Anuradhapura of course was wild forest, but still an object of occasional pilgrimages. Alut Nuwara, on the borders of the wild Bintenne, was a storehouse for corn and salt, but of the ancient shrine of Mahiyangana there, Knox does not seem to have heard. And the king intentionally kept the outer portions of his territory uncultivated and without roads that they might be impassable to the invaders. The king, since a serious rebellion which had taken place in 1664, lived almost entirely at Digili Nuwára in Hewahette. But Matale, Puttalam and Badulla were in some sort under his rule.

In all their degeneracy, the Sinhalese of that latter part of the 17th century retained much of their skill in the more delicate handicrafts. Knox speaks many times of the excellence of their work in wood, iron, and silver. Nor had they lost their love for gay decorations, processions, and shows. He describes, in an English sailor's way, exactly such splendours as we have read of in the Mahawansa, and adds, '*And then they say the palace is adorned beyond heaven.*'

And he describes the Kandy Perahœra with great exactness.

Of the morals of the Sinhalese of that day he gives no very attractive picture. Of marriage they had little idea (this was in the Kandian districts) and child-murder was very common. But it is only fair to notice that he gives them credit—which we should not do now—for being very much averse to stealing and not much given to quarrelling or bloodshed! and says that persons could travel about with little or no danger.

But it is with what Knox tells us of the state of Buddhism in those days that we are here chiefly concerned. Few or none, he says, were zealous about it. The worship of the (Hindu) gods and of devils was in full force; and the maxim, 'Buda for the soul (so he puts it) and the gods for this world,' shows that the popular superstition was then much what it is now. How it appeared to Knox may best be gathered from a few extracts. He thus begins his account of the religion of the Sinhalese.

'The religion of their country is idolatry. There are many both gods and devils, which they worship, known by particular names, which they call them by. They do acknowledge one to be Supreme, whom they call Ossa polla maupt Dio (Ahasa polowa mœw Deviyo), which signifieth the Creator of heaven and earth; and it is he also who still ruleth and governeth the same. This great Supreme God, they hold, sends forth other deities to see his will and pleasure

executed in the world; and these are the petty and inferior gods. These, they say, are the souls of good men, who formerly lived upon the earth. There are devils also, who are the inflictors of sickness and misery upon them; and these they hold to be the souls of evil men. . . . There is another great god whom they call Buddou, unto whom the salvation of souls belongs.'

He describes the saying of 'pirit' by the Buddhist monks, as follows: 'When any man is minded to provide for his soul, they bring one of these priests under a cloth, held up by four men, unto his house, with drums and pipes, and great solemnity, which only can be done unto the king besides. Then they give him great entertainment, and bestow gifts on him according as they are able; which, after he hath tarried a day or more, they carry for him, and conduct him home with the like solemnities as he came: but the night that he tarries with them he must sing bonna (bana), that is, matter concerning their religion, out of a book made of the leaves of tallipot; and then he tells them the meaning of what he sings, it being in an eloquent style, which the vulgar people do not understand.'

The Buddhist 'priests' he divides into Elders (terunnansé, which he writes 'tirinanx') and ordinary rank and file ('gonni,' *i.e.* ganin, member of the 'gana' or 'assemblage'). 'The second order of priests,' he says, 'are those called Koppuhs (Kapurála), who are the priests that belong to the temples of the other gods: their temples are called dewals,' and he reckons as 'the third order the jadeses, priests of the spirits.' 'When they are sick, they dedicate a red cock to the devil' (jaccof, *i.e.* yako).

He devotes a chapter to the worship of planets, and many pages to other superstitions, but to 'Buddou' (this represents the Sinhalese form of the name, though we should correctly write it 'Budu') he gives little space; though he says 'he it is, they say, who must save their souls,' and 'for this god, above all others, they seem to have a high respect and devotion.'

Ribeyro, who was in Ceylon in the earlier part of Rájasinha's reign, and his editor, the Abbé Le Grand, are still more ignorant of any serious distinction between the Hindu and the Buddhist elements in Sinhalese religion. Ribeyro, for instance, has this sentence:[1] 'The idols are of various forms; some are of man,

[1] Literally translated from the original. Ribeyro 'passed forty years altogether in the Indies and eighteen years in the jungles of Ceylon.'

some of woman, others of monkeys, and others of elephants with many arms, others with bow and arrow, and an immensity of various figures; above all there is one to which they show much reverence, which is called Bodu; the figure of this is (that) of a man, and it is made very great, thereby to represent that he was a great saint. I saw it in a pagoda, and it was six cavados ($13\frac{1}{2}$ feet[1]) in height. This, say they, was a great God,' etc.

Of the places of pilgrimage Knox mentions only two, the Footprint on Adam's Peak, and the Bo-tree at Anuradhapura. Of the Tooth he makes no mention, under circumstances which make it all but certain that he knew nothing about it. According to the Mahawansa, it had been placed by Rajasinha's father in safe keeping in an obscure part of the country and was brought out again into Kandy by his son. But if none of those with whom Knox talked ever mentioned it,—and he was familiar with Kandy,—either the Tooth had for some time occupied a less important place in Buddhist devotion than the Mahawansa allows, or the ignorance of the common people about Budddism must have been indeed complete.

But be that as it may, the historical veracity of the native chronicler, though not his estimate of the relative proportions of things, is confirmed by Knox in this, as in so many other cases.

But nothing in Knox's evidence is more remarkable, as a token of the indifference of the people towards Buddhism, than the position which Christianity held even in the Kandian country. Christians, he says, were looked up to and trusted, and believed to be more conscientious than others. This refers not only or especially to white men, but to native Christians, whose numbers must therefore have been appreciable. They were, he tells us, tolerated by all, but especially by the king, who preferred them, when he could get them, for offices of trust. To Mohammedans also full toleration seems to have been extended.

In spite of the general indifference the same indications of individual attachment to Buddhism were seen then which we see now. The tiny dagaba in the little courtyard of the house,—the lay devotees, especially women, begging in the name of Buddha,—these were not wanting.

And I will conclude with an extract which sets the Buddhist temperament in a favourable light.

[1] Lee says '32 feet,' but Vieyra makes the 'covado' $\frac{3}{4}$ of a yard.

'They reckon the chief points of goodness to consist in giving to the priests, in making pudgiahs, sacrifices to their gods, in forbearing shedding the blood of any creature, which to do they call pau boi, a great sin; and in abstaining from eating any flesh at all, because they would not have any hand, or any thing to do, in killing any living thing. They reckon herbs and plants more innocent food. It is religion also to sweep under the bogahah, or god-tree, and keep it clean. It is accounted religion to be just and sober, and chaste and true, and to be endowed with other virtues, as we do account it.

'They give to the poor out of a principle of charity, which they extend to foreigners, as well as to their own countrymen, but of every measure of rice they boil in their houses for their families, they will take out a handful, as much as they can gripe, and put into a bag, and keep it by itself, which they call mitta-haul (mettaṁ-rice? or handful-rice?) and this they give and distribute to such poor as they please, or as come to their doors.

'Nor are they charitable only to the poor of their own nation, but, as I said, to others, and particularly to the Moorish beggars, who are Mohammedans by religion: these have a temple in Candy.'

CHAPTER XXVIII

LATER REVIVALS OF THE COMMUNITY

IT does not come within my province to trace the political history of the island, nor the history of its Christianity; only the events which have directly affected the Buddhist system, and made it what it now is. Of these events the most important, in the recent period, to which we have now come, are the importations of foreign monks and books, the successive revivals of the Community by foreign help.

The frequency of these renewals of the succession of elders is significant of the weak hold which the system must have had on the people. Whenever the kings were unable or indisposed to foster the Community, its numbers rapidly fell off; till the chronicler had to record, as he does many times, that there were no longer enough monks to form a chapter, or that there was not a single fully qualified monk left in Lanka.

Such a falling-off had occurred many times before the recent period. Vijaya Bahu, in the eleventh century (1065), is the first of whom it is recorded[1] that he restored the succession by bringing monks

[1] Mahavansa, lx. 4.

from Ramanna.[1] Parakrama Bahu II., the hero of our last chapter, introduced foreign monks from different parts of Southern India and from Tamba (explained as Máramma) to teach the Sinhalese, and to promote unity among the native monks.[2]

Yet in the time of Vimala Dhamma Suriya,[3] the succession of 'ordained priests' is said to have failed entirely in Ceylon, and to have been restored by the king's inviting Nandicakka and other 'priests' from Arakan. He lodged the visitors at Getambe, a suburb of Kandy, near the 'ordination-house,' the 'water-boundary,' in the Mahaveliganga.

Again, in Sri Vijaya Rajasinha's time, A.D. 1740, it is said that the Community was extinct;[4] and the king, after inquiry in Pegu, Arakan, and Siam, countries where Buddhism flourished, obtained monks from Ayodhya in Siam to continue the succession. This is the first mention of the Siam line.

[1] The Provinces situated between Arakan and Siam.

The author of a modern Sinhalese work, the Sásanavaṁsa, treats this as the cessation of the original succession from Mahinda, and holds that in Vijaya's time the pure Rámanyan succession was brought over and established in Lanka. This, though it may be strictly true, is not the light in which the Mahavansa puts the matter; for the chroniclers speak long after Vijaya Bahu's time 'of the three Nikáyas.' See 'Sásanavaṁsa Dipa,' by 'Acariya Vimalására Thera, A.D. 1881, ch. xii. 1290-1293. This work is that in answer to which was written the 'Simánaya dappano.' Its twelfth chapter contains the principal notices of reforms in the community of Ceylon, paraphrased with no great ability from the Mahavansa.

[2] In Mahavansa, lxxxiv. 10, occurs the phrase 'Ubhayasásanam,' 'the double church.' Mr. Vijésinhe understands it of the Mahávihára on the one hand, and the Abhayagiri and Jetavana on the other. Vimalasára Thera (*l.c.* line 1350) seems to understand it as implying a mixed succession, Rámanyan and Cholian. Those who are acquainted with modern local controversies may see what underlies these differences of opinion.

[3] Mahavansa, xciv. 15.

[4] *Ib.* xcviii. 88, 89.

But it was by his successor, Kirti Sri Raja Sinha, about A.D. 1750, that the Siamese succession which now exists was introduced.[1] Of this king's reign a fuller account must be given.

He established his Court at Kandy or Sirivaddhana, and is described as a pattern of the royal virtues as well as of the merit of giving to the Community, and promoting the knowledge of the sacred law. He had the Pitaka books written out, not only the Damsak and other popular Sutras, and the Mangalasutta and other short pieces used in 'Pirit,' but the large collections, the Digha and Saṁyutta Nikayas. He made pilgrimages to the ancient shrines at Alut Nuwara, Anuradhapura, and Polonnaruwa; but it is not said that he attempted their restoration. He did not scruple to promote, though his biographer mentions it with a slightly apologetic tone, the cult of Hindu deities, Natha, Vishnu and the rest, 'like the former kings of Lanka;' and in particular the 'perahœra' or procession, carrying the emblems of these idols; but he 'thought it proper' (as his faith and wisdom increased) 'that they should be preceded by a procession in honour of Buddha.'

This was the beginning of the 'perahœra,' the still popular festival, in its present form; and we nave it described by one who was doubtless an eyewitness of it under this king.

The king 'caused a golden howdah of exquisite workmanship to be fixed on the back of the State

[1] Mahavansa, xcix. 100.

elephant, and adorned this white elephant with ornaments. And this one was surrounded by elephants ridden by men who carried silver umbrellas and chowries and flowers, and canopies with flowers hanging from them, and manifold other things that were meet for offerings; by divers flags and banners; by men who disguised themselves in manifold dress; by royal ministers; and by divers strangers. And when everything was thus made ready, the ruler of men reverently placed the splendid golden casket containing the relics of the body of Buddha on the howdah, and caused the flower-strewers to strew flowers thereon, thick as rain. Then there was great rejoicing, with cries of 'Sadhu,' and with the sound of conchs and cymbals and the noise of divers drums. And the good people, who were struck with wonder and amazement, unceasingly worshipped the relics with their hands raised to their foreheads. And the ruler of men arranged that the procession should be preceded by men carrying torches and by men wearing festive garments, and by a variety of festive shows. And he commanded that the relic of the Conqueror, which had obtained the first place among the things that were to be adored by gods and demigods and men, should be carried foremost; and the rest, such as the emblems of gods, and men, and others, should follow behind it. And he himself, surrounded with all the magnificence of royalty, amidst shouts of victory and applause, with the majesty of a king, and with great rejoicings, went

forth, as if displaying before men the manner in which the chief of the gods celebrated the great feast of the relic in heaven.'

Amongst other good deeds, he caused the Mahavansa, which apparently had been continued only to the reign of Parakrama IV., to be 'written up.' And it was natural that many verses thereof should be devoted to his praises and those of his two brothers the sub-kings.

But it was in his time that the 'Olandas,' no longer performing merely 'the duties of messengers to the kings of Lanka,'[1] on account of some former karma committed by the people of Lanka, or neglect on the part of[2] the gods who were appointed to guard the religion and the land, 'began to vex the inhabitants.' War ensued, and the Dutch advanced to Kandy 'like a host of devils,' entered the city, and destroyed all religious books and other sacred things. The king, however, had prudently withdrawn, and had taken with him what was regarded as the sacred Tooth, so that only its empty casket and the golden howdah fell into the invaders' hands. The Dutch were not able, however, to hold Kandy; and the king returned with the relic amid great rejoicings. A treaty was made, and the casket and the howdah were returned, and Buddhism was re-established with some of its former splendour.

But the revival of the monastic Community was

[1] Mahavansa, xc. 111.

[2] *Ib.* xc. 115. Devatádinaṁ pamádena. The learned translator's phrase, 'neglect of the gods,' is ambiguous, but the original is not.

the great event of his reign. The historian carelessly (I suppose) tells us that when he came to the throne there was not one 'priest' in Ceylon. This is inconsistent with what had already been stated about the restoration of the Community by the preceding king; but it indicates the received opinion that the revival of the eighteenth century was substantially the work of Kirti Sri Raja Sinha.

For the application to Siam for monks and missionaries, which his predecessor had begun, was carried a great deal further by Kirti Sri. Whatever may have been the splendour of the Kandy perahœra, religion was at a very low ebb in the island at large. 'It had languished grievously; many of the "priests" led sinful and wicked lives, maintaining families, and devoting themselves to worldly business.' These evils the king, with the aid of the learned and pious Saranankara, endeavoured to remedy, forbidding 'all practices that became not the priesthood, even those of astrology and medicine.' But his chief reform was connected with the application, made through a solemn embassy conveyed in Dutch ships, to Dhammika, the wise king of Siam, inviting him to send a mission.

When all allowance has been made for the enthusiasm of a historian who enjoyed Kirti Sri's patronage, this must be recognised as one of the most important pages in the history of Buddhism in Ceylon.

Dhammika, on receiving the embassy,[1] astonished

[1] The hundredth chapter does not seem to be chronologically a conti ation of the ninety-ninth, but an amplified statement of earlier events.

to hear of the decay of the Buddhist religion in Lanka, called together the heads of the Community in Siam, and with their advice selected more than ten monks, enough to form a chapter, under one named Upáli, and sent them with bana books, images, and presents, to Trincomale. The Sinhalese king had them conveyed with the utmost respect from the sea to Kandy, the road[1] having been specially cleared for their progress, and himself went as far as the Mahaveliganga, at Katugastota, to meet them. He received them with great pomp, and following them into the city installed them in the Malvatta Vihara. On the full noonday of Asalhi (July-August), the Kandian king himself repaired to the Malvatta precincts, and entered the Poya Hall; where he, apparently, presided, whilst the elders from Siam admitted to the full monastic profession (or 'ordained to the higher rank of the priesthood') the principal novices of the local Community. The succession was thus established on an indisputable footing, the number of Siamese monks present having been sufficient—as was probably not the case in the preceding reign—for a valid act of the Community.

Thenceforward the king diligently encouraged the development of the revived Community, and appointed the distinguished Saranankara to the office, doubtless introduced from Siam, of Prince of the Community. The members of the Siamese mission remained some time in Ceylon, and visited the prin-

[1] Or, a road? Mahavansa, c. lxxx., Maggaṁ visodhetvá.

cipal sacred places,[1] and then returned in Dutch ships to their own country.

The record of the temples and images which this king built in the neighbourhood of Kandy is ample and probably accurate, but contains nothing to our present purpose. He died in 1780; and was succeeded by his accomplished brother, Rajadhi. His nephew, the infamous tyrant, Sri Vikrama Raja Sinha, was deposed and banished, and the country passed under the dominon of the English in 1816.

What has been sketched in this chapter has been the history of Buddhism, not in Ceylon in general, but in the Kandian district. The northern part of Ceylon had by this time long been a Tamil country, and its Hindu inhabitants had probably no intercourse at all with the Kandians, from whom they were divided by the pathless forests in which lay hidden the ruins of the ancient cities of the Sinhalese kings and of their vast works of irrigation. The Maritime Provinces, under Dutch rule, had become in a considerable degree Europeanised, and a large proportion of their inhabitants were at least nominally Christian. In them, though Buddhism was not extinct, it was officially suppressed,[2] and was almost

[1] Sixteen are reckoned, of which Mahiyangana (Alut Nuwara) is the first, as supposed to be the oldest.

[2] 'Proclamation was publicly made that no native could aspire to the rank of modliar, or even be permitted to farm land, or hold office under the government, who had not first undergone the ceremony of baptism, etc.' (*c.* A.D. 1640). 'Penalties were imposed on devil-dances and similar idolatrous ceremonies' in 1682: in 1692 'they declared the Buddhist ceremonies at Kalany to be prohibited, and ordered the priests to withdraw from the temple.'—Tennent's *Christianity in Ceylon*, p. 45 *seq.*

out of sight, to reappear little by little as English legislation removed the disqualifications that had been attached to open profession.[1] The last of these disqualifications was removed by the Marriage Ordinance of 1863. Till this was passed the only registers were Christian, and very many who were Buddhists at heart made a formal profession of Christianity in order to secure the privilege of duly registered baptism and marriage.[2] The new ordinance provided for the registration of all marriages within the legal degrees, which differ only in one point from those in force in England. For all civil purposes, the Buddhist has been since 1863 on a perfect equality with the Christian; and there is no reason to think that any now leave Buddhism from any interested motives. On the contrary, many do so in the face of very considerable domestic and some social persecution, which, on Buddhist principles, ought not to be the case.

The Siamese succession restored in the Kandian country was never extended to any but the highest caste,[3] the Vellala, nor, of course, could members of the lower castes from the low country obtain admission into the Siamese Community. But in the low country the predominance of the Vellalas could not, as European ideas and education gained ground,

[1] Almost with greater rapidity than their numbers had originally increased, they now commenced to decline.—Tennent's *Christianity in Ceylon*, p. 83.

[2] Tennent wrote in 1850: 'Even to the present day a native child cannot be legally registered without proving baptism by a Christian minister.'—*Ib.* p. 88.

[3] See p. 430.

remain so marked as it still was in Kandy. Many members, epecially of those castes which rank second and third, were educated, enterprising, rich, and influential; and their exclusion from the worshipped Community could not continue. They were not content to give all their alms to strangers, and determined to have a Community of their own; and in 1802, as the result of an embassy sent to the Burmese Buddhists, the Burmese or Amarapura sect was founded.[1]

[1] Tennent's *Christianity in Ceylon*, p. 246, Note F., where there is a translation of a letter, in which the head of the Community in Burma narrates the circumstances and ceremonies of this mission. See also Lee's *Ribeyro*, Appendix xii.

PART IV

THE PRESENT

CHAPTER XXIX

THE BUDDHISM NOW TAUGHT IN CEYLON

HOW far will a description of the Buddhism of the Pitakas, such as I have tried to give (Chapters v. to xix.), serve for a description of the Buddhism of Ceylon to-day?

A definite answer can be given to this question, if we first draw a broad distinction between the moral system with the theory of human life on which it rests, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the legendary histories and the theories of cosmogony and geography. The whole being divided into these two groups, we may assert that the first, the moral, is held now with little alteration; but that the second, the mass of legends and cosmogony, has been so greatly developed and raised to so much greater prominence, as to make the later Buddhism differ widely from that of the Pitakas.

The moral system as taught now differs little from

what we find in the sacred books. The aim, indeed, of the leaders of Buddhism at this moment is to teach exactly as the ancient books taught. But whether what was held in Ceylon a hundred years ago, before the European study of the subject began, was as true to the ancient standards, this will be questioned; and the point must be examined.

The Sinhalese, it is sometimes remarked, have been content to relearn their own religion from Europeans. Many people suppose that before European scholars unearthed the Pali language, the 'sacred books' were nearly or quite unknown; and that real Buddhism has been recovered for the Sinhalese in the present century; and that till this took place, it was almost merged in the Hinduism which had been encouraged by the Tamil kings.

This, I am convinced, is an exaggeration. The tradition had been more faithfully handed down among the Sinhalese themselves than this would imply. Before Europeans touched the matter, the Sinhalese, if they taught at all, taught substantially what they are teaching now, at any rate on the side of morality. The sketch that has been given (in Chapters xxiii.-xxviii.) of the contents of the Mahavansa shows, indeed, that Buddhism in Ceylon underwent vicissitudes, and that Hinduism grew up more and more beside it and within it; but it shows also that appeal was made at each revival to the Pitaka books and to the 'succession of teachers' (guruparamparáwa); and that there was no complete

breach—this the very continuity of the Mahavansa itself proves, — with the earlier Sinhalese centuries.

We are not entirely without evidence as to the un-Europeanised Buddhism of Ceylon. Knox, who was detained a prisoner in the Kandian country for nearly twenty years, between 1660 and 1680, has left a rough but vigorous sketch of the system as it presented itself to his unprepared but very acute observation. His outlines are not at variance with any feature of the description which a modern visitor would give.

Much later than Knox, but long before any European scholarship had been brought to bear on the subject, the Dutch governor, Falck, in 1766, in cultivating friendly relations with the Sinhalese, put a series of questions to several presumably independent Buddhist authorities; and besides the answers to these questions, he received officially two connected statements about Buddhist tenets, from one of the principal elders, and from an educated Sinhalese official—the latter, on account of his half-European education, being a less valuable witness. These authorities, with many variations in detail, agree substantially in the accounts which they give of (1) the constitution of the worlds of gods and men; (2) of the soul of man; (3) of the nature of good and evil; (4) of reward and punishment; (5) of faith and worship;—these being the chief heads, and this the order, under which the questions fall.

1. Asked whether they believe in gods, they reply to this effect: There are an immense number of inferior gods, in Brahmalokas and devalokas, and in trees, etc., over whom Mahabrahma is supreme (except when a Buddha is in existence), but the Buddha is far superior to them all; on him the gods attend, and from him they receive instruction.

The world came into existence an immense time ago, not by creation but by nature (that is, I suppose, by its *own* nature, 'swabháwen'); but it is periodically destroyed at vast intervals of time. In each such destruction, those beings that are in a certain division of the highest world called the Abbhassara Brahmaloka do not perish; and after the reconstruction of the world (which takes place through the surviving action-force of past beings) some of the inhabitants of that Brahmaloka, those of them whose merit is nearly exhausted, find their way to this world, and here growing by degrees less heavenly and more earthly with the food they feed on, at last propagate a human race.

2. Asked whether there is such a thing as a soul, some replied that there is; but this is explained by what others say, that there is some principle called 'skandha' (what I have rendered 'constituents of being') which live after the body dies, only to be born again according to the actions. As another puts it, all the parts of the man cease entirely; none of the material elements, nor of the immaterial elements continue, but a mysterious something, 'concerning

which,' as the writer discreetly says, 'what appears in the law of Buddha will inform.'[1]

3. Among moral evils, the chief place is assigned to avarice, etc. (the three ''Asavas') and to stupidity or thoughtlessness, etc. (*i.e.* to the four 'Agatis'); or to faults of body, word, and mind; while in moral good the chief value is assigned to giving, purity, and belief in the doctrines of Buddha. All agree, when asked, that there is a conscience or witness in the heart, some defining it in a way which shows they are thinking of the favourite 'hiri-ottappaṁ.' Above all, recollectedness is necessary.[2] The five, the eight, and the ten 'precepts' are enumerated, but not consistently. In no case, among the 'five Replies to Questions,' is the prohibition of intoxicating drink reckoned as one of the five, or even mentioned at all. It is included and enlarged upon in the 'statement' of the 'high priest.'[3] In no case is any reference made to the Buddha as an example of conduct.

4. In regard to reward and punishment, most of the answerers place as the highest result of good life Nirvána, 'which destroys all errors and acquires all happiness.' Some do not mention Nirvána,[4] but only the numerous heavens: all agree about the numerous hells and penal states of being. One reply reckons Nirvána as a local 'place of departed Buddhas,' situated above the twenty-sixth heaven, and magni-

[1] Answer of the Galle priests, *ib.* p. 10. I have been unable to find the Sinhalese original of these documents.

[2] Mudaliyar Rájapaxe, *ib.* p. 29. [3] *Ib.* 98. [4] Galle priests, *ib.* ii.

ficently adorned with gold, silver, and precious stones.[1]

5. To the question: 'In what does your worship consist?' the almost unanimous answer is, 'In faith in the Buddha.' To the 'statement' of Rájapaxe, an Europeanised servant of Government, and possibly a Christian, I attach very little value. He stands alone in saying that the Sinhalese pray three times a day, at sunrise, noon, and sunset![2]

The 'statement' of the 'high priest,' which I think the most important as being probably the least

[1] Rájapaxe, *ib.* p. 159.

[2] For prayer, as a request addressed to a Person, there is of course in Buddhism no possible place. But there is a theory, not in the earliest books, but in those which represent the earlier developments of the Southern School, that wishes, expressed under certain circumstances, are efficacious. Such wishes are held to be efficacious, not as moving the will of a Person (which is the nature of prayer), but as operating under some necessary law; a special case, so to speak, of the operation of action-force.

One class of such supposed efficacious wishes is mentioned below (on p. 474, where see the note), and consists in the assignment of one's own merit to some one else. It does not seem to be reconcilable with the principle of Karma.

Another is alluded to on p. 444, and consists in applying to one's-self or to others the merits of the Buddha. This, which I think the nearest approach to prayer, is not common in the books. But I think it may often be in the minds of modern Buddhists. The ignorant peasant, who crouches on the road at Kandy to make obeisance in the direction of the Tooth-relic, comes probably very near to such prayer as the Hindu offers before his image. He is vaguely commending his need to some supposed (or 'unknown') Higher Power.

A third kind of efficacious wish consists in directing to a particular desired object the merit of a particular meritorious action of one's own. This is called emphatically 'a wish' (Patthaná). An instance of it is found in the introduction to the 'Questions of Milinda,' where a novice thus obtains, as the consequence of his merit in sweeping out the courtyard of the monastery (reluctantly as he did it), birth as the clever king Milinda, while his senior obtains, apparently as the consequence of his merit in making the novice sweep, birth as the sage Nagasena, who answers all Milinda's questions.

The fourth and most important case is that of the 'Act of Truth' (saccakiriyá). A person who has acquired merit may, by the simple truthful assertion of his past act or course of conduct, command the elements and work miracles. An extreme

influenced by European thought and language, shows a tendency to emphasise the idea—not much developed even in the later Pitaka books—of suitable retribution, through transmigration, in future human births. The killer of animals, in addition to many births in hells, will, after return to human life, be poor and wretched; the thief will be starved and naked; the lustful will be a hundred times a despised and unmarried woman; the liar will have bad breath and two snake-like tongues, and will never be believed;

illustration of it is given in the 'Questions of Milinda,' where a person, who had very little merit to boast of, yet making a truthful assertion of sueh merit as she had, turned baek the flooded Ganges, to the astonishment of King Asoka and all his eourt.

The king of China, we are told in the same place ('Questions of King Milinda,' *S.B.E.* xxxv. p. 182), by the like foree of truth, every four months used to drive his ehariot a league into the sea, and the mighty waves rolled baek before him. King Parakrama (Mahavansa, 70, 209) in like manner stopped the rain which threatened to interfere with his mareh.

I question whether this theory is of Buddhist origin. It appears to me to be akin to the wide-spread belief in supernatural power inevitably aequired by aets of austerity.

I need hardly say that there is no idea of any such powers now in Ceylon.

Similarly, for what we understand by 'publie service,' there is, strietly speaking, no plaee. To offer gifts, and to hear the Law, are the only duties for whieh householders—aeeording to the Pitakas—come to the 'dwellings' (vihára) of the monks. Temples and images, in those days there were none. But after relie-houses and image-houses were multiplied, something like loealised worship neeessarily grew up. Very little has ever been done in Ceylon to organise this into publie worship; and when we read of Sinhalese kings promoting publie religion, it is generally by making arrangements for the reading of the saered books. But there are indications in the Mahavansa (90, 77) of the king's instituting something like a ritual. This never grew to much; but at the present day we hear of a movement in the same direetion. We hear it said, or we read it in a guide-book, that at certain hours there are 'serviees' in the Tooth-temple at Kandy. How mueh this means I am not sure. I have been assured by Buddhists that the only truth in it is, that at eertain hours the laity are speeially invited to eome and do homage to the faesimile of the Tooth (the Tooth itself is shown only on rare oeeasions), while, on the other hand, English visitors have told me that they have witnessed a kind of ritual, in whieh the people responded to what was said by the minister, after the manner of a litany.

the drunkard will be subject to disease and delirium. All this illustrates the influence which the Jataka literature has had in forming the Buddhist mind.

Such is an abstract of these documents of 1766. It does not hence appear that the theory at least of Buddhism, as held by the natives of Ceylon before European scholars knew anything about it, differed in any considerable degree from that which such scholars have since elicited from the Pali books; or that the tradition of these books had been lost sight of, or confused with the Hinduism and devil-worship which were going on alongside it.

I conclude, therefore, that for the moral system of modern Ceylon—Buddhism, native and not imported, I may refer the reader to my description of the moral system of the Pitakas.

In the regions of history and cosmogony, on the other hand, there is a wide interval between the Pitakas and the later tradition. In those regions, the Sinhalese Buddhist holds, and has long held, as part and parcel of Buddhism, not clearly distinguished from what was more properly called Doctrine, an immense accumulation of romantic and extravagant lore. The life itself of Gotama was early enlarged (probably at different times between B.C. 250 and A.D. 400) by many incidents that had been unknown to the Pitakas, and embellished in every point with enormous numbers, and with flowery and luscious details. Some of the incidents thus inserted, and some of the details of this embellishment, came to be among the most

interesting, the favourite parts of the story. The details of the Buddha's birth and of his renunciation, of his visit to his mother in heaven, and of his visits to Ceylon, came actually to take precedence, in interest and in the poetical wealth laid out upon them, of the more authentic incidents in the Vinaya.

The theory, which had its nucleus within the Pitaka cycle, of a succession of previous Buddhas, was developed into the minutest accounts of the life of each such previous Buddha, and of the position which the Bodhisat (he who was to be Gotama) had occupied under each; till a whole literature had been compiled of the prehistoric biography of the Buddha. One branch of this, virtually embodied already in the Pitakas, the 550 previous births of Buddha—a collection, in fact, of all the fables, proverbs, and 'Joe Millers' of the East—outshone in popularity, as was natural, the less amusing treatises and sermons. Some especially of these 'birth-stories,' those which relate the great achievements of virtue on a heroic scale by which the Bodhisat was fitted to become Buddha, acquired the very highest position in sacred lore, and were probably better known than any other part of 'bana' (the sacred books as recited). And these tales, which tell how he who was to be the Buddha gave away his eyes in charity, gave his own body to be roasted, gave—greatest of all—his wife and his children to be beaten and enslaved before his eyes,—these did probably more than either Vinaya or Sutra to form the Buddhist mind. To us,

such achievements, as not pretending to have been done in this life at all, are too obviously fictitious to have much interest. To the Sinhalese mind they were not palpably unhistorical. Buddha, in the popular thought, was the hero of the Jatakas.

Similarly, around every name to which the Pitakas alluded, the Commentaries had built up a mass of legend of the popular and attractive type; while the native chronicles, full of the exploits of Sinhalese kings and of their splendid liberality, had added their abundance to the store of food for the national imagination.

In this connection may be mentioned, too, the legendary lists of primeval kings,—lists and legends of old Indian, and doubtless pre-Buddhist, origin,—from Mahasammata onwards. The first 84,000 of these kings had reigned each a million years; King Okkáka, the mythical ancestor of the 'Solar Dynasty,' comes quite late in the series, and his reign lasted only 10,000 years. The incalculably distant dates assigned to former Buddhas and to the earlier exploits of the Bodhisat find place under these primeval monarchs, and claim their history for Buddhism.

The Sinhalese authors of the fifth and sixth and of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries worked up this material in a native form. The more romantic of the Jataka tales were told in poetry, and drawn out through the 'linked sweetness' of innumerable stanzas; stanzas brilliant with the puns, and tinkling with the jingling assonance which is the pride of Sinhalese verse, and

overladen with lotus flowers, blue and white and red, and with sandal-wood perfumes and scarlet iron-wood leaves, with swans and honey-bees, with armies and sounding cities and many-storied palaces; a literature crowded with princesses and magnificent with the march of elephants, and strewn as thick as the floor of a fairy's cavern with gold and precious stones. This, as well as the moral system, is part of what was meant, or is meant still, to the Sinhalese mind by Buddhism.

Then there was the boundless field of cosmogony, with its infinite myriads of cycles of ages, and universes piled upon universes, and vast revolutions and cataclysms—all of which Buddhism had claimed for its own, because all lay open to the Buddha's eye, and all had been illuminated by his innumerable predecessors. It is impossible to ask an English reader to wade through even a short sketch of the geography—Mount Meru and the concentric seas of milk and the rest—the ten thousand worlds, each having its complete apparatus of heavens, earth, continents, and hells, with their presiding deities; or of the chronology of 'asankhya-kap-laksha,' innumerable myriads of cycles, the least division of which is longer than the period in which the touch of a silk handkerchief once in a century would wear away a mountain! These things are boundless nonsense; but they have for the Indian mind a solemn charm, and though not of Buddhist origin, they lend majesty to Buddhism. Gotama, we are told, discouraged such

speculations; but they were not altogether excluded from the Pitakas, and his later followers have emphatically made them their own. How a world-cycle comes to an end, by age-long storms and showers and fires; how sun after sun comes into being till the earth is dried and scorched and consumed; the Sutta which describes these catastrophes, and gives the authority of 'bana' to such imaginations, is still among those of which copies are oftenest met with in Ceylon, and even of late years has had actual influence in exciting the minds of the Sinhalese.[1] One has only to remember what satisfaction is given to the feelings of a half-educated Englishman, when the lecturer tells him there are probably 'some stars whose light has not yet reached us,' to appreciate the charm which an 'asankhya-kap-laksha' may have for a Sinhalese.

It is not enough, then, in answering the question, What has been the religion of the Sinhalese? to point to the Pali canon, and to what are logically and historically the fundamental parts of Buddhism. The later and more imaginative portions are truly part and parcel of the Buddhism of the Sinhalese, perhaps the part which is most endeared to them. The Five Prohibitions and the poya days, the duty of sparing life, and the opportunity of giving to the monks, these by themselves could hardly have gained a permanent hold over the hearts of a people; but other attractions besides these have been at work.

[1] Súryotgamana Sutta.

All their stories of home and childhood, all their national literature, all that was grand to them in history and science; the conquests of their kings, the great buildings of their country, all were engaged in the interests of Buddhism. Not a building but had on it the lotus or the hare-in-the-moon; not a ballad but it opened with homage to the Buddha, to the Law, and to the Community. Close to every great tank, from which the fields were irrigated, shone the white dome of the dagaba.

These are strong roots, everywhere twisted into the soil; many of them, however, are slowly but surely dying. Education is steadily destroying all belief in Mount Meru and the 'sakwalas,' and converting the long range of former Buddhas from an imposing decoration into an encumbrance. The national literature is rapidly being forgotten; not many can even read it, and only a few old people now can say by heart the favourite old stanzas which once were household words. Of the great monuments of architecture, some, it is true, are being repaired; but by repair they are disenchanted, and the modern Sinhalese prefers an 'upstair-house' on an English model to all the palaces of all the Parakramas.

Buddhism, if it lasts, will soon rest entirely on other supports than these; on that which is good and true in its own teaching; on its alliance with Western scepticism; and lastly, on that deep root, as yet alas! vigorous, which it has struck into the dark places of sorcery and superstition.

CHAPTER XXX

MODERN MONASTIC LIFE

WHEREVER Buddhism is to be found in Ceylon,[1] it is substantially the same. A monk who goes from the south northward, or from the maritime low country to the central hill country of Kandy, does not find in any monastery which he may visit much that would strike him as unfamiliar in furniture or customs. If it be a monastery of his own society or sect (samágama), he meets no difference whatever; if it belong to another samagama, the differences are still but slight; at any rate with one exception they are such as an outsider might fairly reckon slight.[2]

But the distinction of the four (or three) societies,

[1] Buddhism prevails as the national religion, though side by side with it there is a good deal of Hinduism, some Mohammedanism, and not a little Christianity, over about two-thirds of Ceylon, that is, over the southern and central portions. In the north Hinduism prevails similarly; and in the Hindu parts few Buddhists are to be found. Roughly speaking, if a line were taken (it would not be a straight line) from Puttalam on the west coast, through Vavoniya on the north central road, to Batticaloa on the east coast, very little Buddhism would be found to the north of such a line.

[2] Most of the information contained in this and the following chapter has necessarily, from the nature of the case, been obtained at second-hand; but my informants have all been natives whom I believed to have direct knowledge of the facts.

a distinction internal to Ceylon, is too important a fact to be left unnoticed. It is usual, I believe, to reckon four; those of Siam, Amarapura, Ramanya (Rangoon), and Kelani. The latter, however, is a distinct Samagama or Nikaya only in the proper technical sense, viz., of a province, as having a distinct boundary (simáwa). In every other respect it is one with the Siamese; it is a distinct association or college of monks, but not a separate sect. The other three are more widely distinguished.

The home of the Siam sect is the Kandian country; but it is largely represented also in the low country or maritime provinces, where about twenty per cent. of the monks belong to it. The Amarapura and the Ramanya predominate in the low country, but are little by little gaining ground in the Kandian, where they amount together to ten per cent. of the whole.

All these represent comparatively recent revivals of Buddhism by successive importations of monks, to revive the Community in Ceylon, from Siam and from Burma.

The Siamese is the oldest, and dates its origin from about A.D. 1750, when Kirti Sri Raja obtained twenty Siamese monks from Siam, under the circumstances referred to on p. 406, to revive the succession said to have been lost in Ceylon. The actual Community of Ceylon is therefore of late date, though it is believed, and with good reason, to correspond exactly with the former in customs and in teaching.

The Amarapura society was founded about A.D. 1800 by men who had been expelled, say the Siamese, from the Siam society; some of their followers being men who had actually been to Amarapura to obtain admission.

The Ramanya branch is more recent still, and appears to be distinctly traceable to a desire to return to strict conformity with the principles of the books.

I now go on to state the distinguishing peculiarities of the sects. That of Siam is distinguished from the two others by one marked outward difference: the yellow robe is worn over the left shoulder only, the right shoulder remaining uncovered. The other two sects cover both shoulders. It is curious, considering with what extreme minuteness the Vinaya prescribes every point connected with the monks' dress, that each party should be able to defend its practice by appeal to the sacred literature. But so it is. The Siam party can point to the constantly recurring phrase, uttara-sangaṁ ekaṁsaṁ karitvá, and can urge that the phrase is used in the very formula under which every one of them—whether of Siam or of Amarapura—has been admitted to the Community, and which is expressly ordered in the record of the original foundation (Maha Vagga, i. 12. 3). But the Burmese claim authority from the same scriptures for the decorous covering of the *whole body* from the phrase, 'avasesaṁ vivaritvá káyaso.'

But there is a distinction involving a deeper principle than this. The Siamese sect admits to the

Community none but members of the highest caste (the Vellala); while the Amarapura and Ramanya profess to admit all. If this were their actual practice they would justly claim a very honourable distinction, as being the only faithful representatives of a principle which has been considered, though not with perfect accuracy, as the proudest characteristic of Buddhism. But unfortunately, though they admit members of the three castes which are usually held to rank next to the highest, the fishers, and the cinnamon-peelers, and the toddy-drawers, even the Amarapura sect refuse to admit the castes lower than these. They draw a line, though they draw it lower than the Siamese do, and since they draw a line on the basis of caste distinction, they can hardly be said to differ in principle from their neighbours.

The reader will be curious to know how this departure from the acknowledged theory of Buddhism is justified, and to what texts appeal is made. The answer of the Siam sect is this: Buddha commanded us to obey kings; and this custom owes its origin to a royal command (rájánaṁ)—a graceful way of alleging 'force majeure'! The king, Kirti Sri Raja Sinha, who introduced the Siamese succession, insisted that it should be confined to the Vellalas. The other sects, who draw the line lower down, have not this plausible pretext to allege; they would reply, I believe, that in theory their Community is open to all, but that in practice there are never found in the castes lower than the first four any people worthy of or capable of ad-

mission. This would be a mere calumny on the lower castes, for these contain—as notably in my own knowledge the dhobies and goldsmiths do—men of ability and character scarcely inferior to any.

The monks of the Siamese fraternity, after receiving alms, utter a short formula in the nature of a blessing: 'May you fully obtain the merit of this gift' (pin purawanawá); but those of the other two sects, in stricter conformity to the Vinaya rules, depart, as they came, in silence.

Another distinction lies in the method of saying bana, or reading the sacred books in public; it is the 'two-seat custom.' In the assemblies collected to hear bana from monks of the Siamese branch, two seats are placed, and two readers divide the duty; one of them reading out the text and the other, not when he has finished, but concurrently, word after word or at most phrase after phrase, giving the interpretation. Among the Amarapura and Ramanya one monk both reads and interprets, and consequently only one seat is needed.

The fifth point of distinction turns on a much more curious question, the question, viz., whether the Buddha is or is not at present in existence. There are prescribed in the Dakshina Vibhanga Sutra (of the uparipannása of Angut. Nik.) seven formulas for giving to the Community,—*e.g.* to the monks only, to the nuns only, to certain monks, to certain nuns,—and so on. Six of these are admitted by all, but the seventh, which stands first, is: 'To the Buddha, to the

monks, and to the nuns' (Tathagate ubhato sanghe dánam demi').

This formula the Amarapura and Ramanya sects recognise and use, but the Siamese disallow it, on the ground that the Buddha is no longer in a position to receive gifts. It was prescribed, they say, while he was living, but since his Nirvana it is necessarily modified. Whereas the others contend that the absent or deceased Buddha may be taken as represented by his relics. The donor places a casket (karanduwa), supposed to contain a relic, in front of him, the representatives of the Community take seats beside it, and then he offers his gift with the words: 'Imaṁ bhikkham sá upavyanjanam imáya sáláya nisinnassa Buddhapamokhassa sakalassa sanghassa demi.'—

'Non nostrum est tantas componere lites!'

When it has been added that the Siam cut their eyebrows, but the other two do not, we have exhausted the list of the points of difference—so far as I have been able to learn—between the Siamese on the one hand and both the other sects on the other.[1]

But the Ramanya sect differs from both the others in points which though less technical are really more important. This small but influential branch of the Community was confessedly founded as a purer and stricter branch. They aim at a more genuine poverty, possess no lands, use no smart robes or silk umbrellas, but carry only the native palm-leaf umbrella; they

[1] One or two other points are mentioned in a note to Lee's translation of *Ribeyro*, p. 277.

avoid all association with Hindu rites and temples (dewala) of Siva, Vishnu, etc., and denounce the worship of all those lower deities (devatá) which occupy in practice so large a part of the field of popular Buddhism. Such a sect is of course a small one, and its influence has depended very much on one man and one place,—Ambagahawatta Unnánse of a vihara at Payyagala, near Kalutara.

It is also more widely separated from the other two than each of them from the other. The lay followers of the Ramanya monks pay no respect to the monks of the other sects, and Ramanya monks are not admitted or do not go to the Tooth Temple in Kandy.

With these exceptions, there are few signs of jealousy between the three sects: the division does not much affect the laity. The great places of pilgrimage are attended by all alike, though they all belong to the Siam sect; and in either place a lay donor may give to whichever monk he pleases.

In regard to wealth, the lands belong chiefly to the Siam fraternity, and in their hands, as I have just said, are the lucrative shrines of Kandy, Anuradhapura, Adam's Peak, Kelani, and Tissamah-áráma. For to them the Kandian king of course assigned all the temple-lands, when he restored the succession in A.D. 1760. The possessions of the Amarapura are necessarily of more recent acquirement, but they have acquired and are acquiring a good deal of land in the low country.

This sect, the Amarapura, is at present the most

prominent in controversy, street preaching, and all that is aggressive. It is among them that the theosophists have found their chief allies. And their more conservative Siam neighbours, resting in quiet on their ancient temple-lands, are inclined to condemn the Amarapura as making a trade of religion (ayaviyadam lœbenawá).

The numerical proportion of the three sects I have no means of exactly ascertaining, but it is guessed that out of the 9598 that there are (census of 1891) in the island, about half are Siam, thirty-four per cent. Amarapura, and sixteen per cent. Ramanya.

Of these distinctions of sects or Nikáyas foreign monks know little or nothing, and it is not obtruded upon them; still, if a monk from Burma visits the Tooth Temple at Kandy, he is not admitted (so I am told) until he has adjusted his robe according to the custom of the Siam Nikaya. (The Tooth Temple, Dalada Máligáwa, is not a pansala or dwelling, but a Vihara, and therefore no ceremonies of reception—taking the bowl, and offering water to wash the feet, and so on—are practised there.) Nor does a monk of one society (except of the Ramanya) find any want of welcome in the monasteries of another. As soon as a yellow-robed figure (sramanarúpaya—the form of a 'samana') is seen approaching, preparations are made, often very slight, but in a few cases with something like the full ceremony of the books, for his reception. And as long as he is there, he is not allowed to feel himself a stranger; although after he

is gone the conversation is likely to turn, so one of my informants naïvely said, upon the errors of his sect.

The visitor will have come either to pay his respects at the shrine to which the vihara is attached, or he will be passing on his journey.

A few of the more learned or careful monks on receiving a visitor ask him in Sinhalese the series of questions which the Buddha is said to have asked of his monks, whenever they came to see him, about their dwellings and their journey. 'In the district in which you live is there facility for getting food? Are your dwellings convenient?' and so on. But as a rule the conversation is either about village trifles, or about lands and law-suits. Sometimes the state of monasteries, books, and studies will be discussed; and occasionally a bana book is got out and more directly religious or literary conversation ensues. I have inquired in vain for any favourite stories or jokes of the pansala, corresponding to such as would be current in an English college. If asked, a monk might relate some bit of local tradition, but there does not appear to be now, as a rule, any interest taken in such things.

The visits of foreign monks, though they have increased of late, do not appear to be very numerous; and it is an unusual thing for Ceylon monks to travel. Very few of them, even of the more learned, had ever heard of Budh Gáyá till the last two or three years.

It was intended apparently by the framers of the Vinaya rules that the members of the Community should move about a good deal from one monastery to another; not that they should be, as the term now is in the Ceylon courts of law, 'incumbents' of particular temples or pansalas, and, in fact, life-proprietors of particular properties. But at present it is very rare, though it is not unknown, for a monk to migrate from one monastery to another. The cause is the tenure of property and of customary advantages, which their holder is unwilling to lose or to transfer.

The tenure of temple-property is a very important fact in its bearing on the status of Buddhism in the island. It is only mentioned here as bearing on the conditions of residence. The properties, having generally been given by kings, not acquired by the monks or given by their immediate lay adherents, are not, as a rule, near the pansalas to which they belong. Some pansalas have villages assigned them for various services, such as sweeping, horn-blowing, and the like. This is the case with the famous pansalas and temples, like the Dalada Maligawa at Kandy, or the Mahiyangana at Alut Nuwara. But many others have lands let out on rent, and cultivated, in some cases by Europeans, as cocoa-nut, coffee, or tea plantations; the monks not hesitating to receive the profits in money. The power to benefit their families, which leading 'incumbents' thence derive, is believed to be the cause of enlistment in the monastic

life in a large proportion of cases. I am assured that it is the opinion of men who are well able to judge, that 'if—as the Buddhist Temporalities Bill proposes—the temple properties are placed in lay hands and administered only for the common benefit, not one in a hundred of those who now join the Community in Ceylon will do so.'

The usual number of occupants of a single pansala is two or three. It is rare for only one to occupy a pansala alone, but five is the largest number that is at all frequent: four is a large pansala. To this the great central colleges at Kandy, called the Asgiriya and the Malwatta pansalas, are exceptions. The rule for their numbers is twenty in each, but there are now forty or more in each. But in the vast majority of the pansalas which are scattered—in homely villages or in romantic seclusion—throughout the island, two monks, of whom one is often a novice, live alone.

There does not appear to be now any arrangement by which the monks of different monasteries should meet in any sort of periodical assembly or council. The isolation in which, as a rule, they live, and which must be one of the most undesirable features of the system, is little interrupted; least, where such an interruption would be most useful. For the occasions of meeting depend very much on two conditions, viz., on the reputation and popularity of particular monks, and on the presence of wealthy and zealous laymen or 'givers' (dáyakayo) in a neighbourhood. Such a 'giver' will invite a specified number of monks to

be entertained by him. This 'act of merit' on his part (and on that of those who come to hear the monks read) is called—it is a very common and popular word in Ceylon—a *pinkama*. The invitation is communicated to the chief monk of the pansala that is in, or nearest to, the donor's own village, and by him it is dispensed. He carries betel, in sign of the invitation, to as many neighbouring pansalas as will together furnish the specified number of guests, and in each of these pansalas the invitation is passed down according to seniority. The meal is served by the host and his family, and consists—in accordance both with the ancient language of the books and with the modern practice of Ceylon dinners—of soft food, hard food, and sweets. At the close there is occasionally the recitation of some suitable sutras—those which praise hospitality to monks and those which describe the characteristics of a good layman's life (see p. 211). But more often this recitation is—inevitably because no one knows or cares for the sutras—omitted; and a short 'blessing' or invocation of merit from the senior monk concludes the ceremony.

A Bana Pinkama, or merit-act for recitation of the sacred books, or preaching festival, is a more important matter. It lasts several days, often fifteen days or a month, and the recitation is a prominent feature. Towards such an entertainment several villages combine, and invite as many monks as they can afford to provide for. The number is sometimes greater than the neighbourhood can supply, and in that case the

leading layman of the inviting villages goes (supposing the case to be in that province) to Kandy, to the central college of the whole Siamese community, *i.e.* to the Asgiriya or to the Malvatta pansala, and the chief of that central monastery sends the required number of monks. Dinner is served at noon each day to the members of the Community, strictly sitting in seniority; and is followed by the recitation, which is continued into the night, and at full-moon seasons often through the whole night long.

Such a *pinkama* as this is the great delight and entertainment of the Sinhalese people. Long preparations are made; a preaching hall (bana-maduwa) is erected, often at considerable expense, and the approaches are abundantly decorated with arches and lines of arcade, covered, in the beautiful Sinhalese taste, with the pale young leaves of the cocoa-nut, and with flowers and fruit. Globular lamps, which by day, at any rate, are far more beautiful than the paper ones of China, are made of the same delicate leaves, placed in parallel sections, like those of which a globe is made, and drawn together at the points. These are hung in the preaching hall and along the paths which lead to it. In the day-time the roads in the neighbourhood present the appearance of a fair. Crowds in clean bright dresses, in which white and red play the greatest part, pour along the roads in high good humour and with perfect decorum. Large models of ships, of steam-engines, of houses, and, above all, of gigantic cobras, are drawn along

on trucks by oxen. They are accompanied by boys and men dressed up—or undressed, and daubed with yellow—as demons, by dancers, by drummers, and all the paraphernalia of festivity.

But to return to the monks with whose customs and duties we are now concerned. Their part in these ceremonies is not to give but to receive. They constitute the 'field' in which all this 'merit is to be sown.' To eat what is set before them, to accept the homage of their adorers—a homage which is as far as possible from implying necessarily any personal respect—and to receive, on the part of the Community, the gifts of money, robes, etc., which may be brought, —these are their primary duties. It is recognised, however, as their bounden duty also to give to the assembled laity the opportunity of acquiring the further merit of hearing, or at least seeing, the sacred books read; the opportunity of acquiring merit by honouring Dhamma as well as by honouring Sangha. With this view—far more than with any idea of instruction or of moral influence—the monks who are guests at a Bana Pinkama take it by turns to read the Pali Sutras, with their Sinhalese comment or explanation. Sometimes, instead of Sutras, they read—what are far more popular, and are invested by custom with the dignity of bana—the famous Jataka stories. These, by the interpretation, the people are able to a great extent to understand; and the more because the interpreting monks understand them themselves. The stories are well known to the older country folk,

though the younger ones and the people in towns know little of them; and by the country folks, at least the older, they are genuinely loved; and the well-known favourites are enthusiastically welcomed. To these must be added the Rajavaliya—a Sinhalese history of Ceylon, made up out of the older Pali chronicles and continued down to the beginning of the present century, with accounts of the wars of the Sinhalese against the Portuguese, Dutch, and English. This is also very popular, and takes rank as 'bana.'

Professor Rhys Davids has drawn a pretty picture of such a moonlight scene.[1] His estimate, with which on the whole I agree, must be qualified by the statement that these gatherings are not even so far pervaded by any genuine Buddhist spirit as to be free from the inroads of the 'caste' tyranny. In a recent instance a poor woman had her jacket indignantly torn from her shoulders by a lay authority during the very reading of 'bana,' not because she was intruding, but because being of low caste she presumed to wear any such covering in the presence of high caste people.

But the acquaintance of the common people with the classical Sinhalese, in which as a rule the commentaries are written, and that of the monks with the Pali original, is far too small, for any meaning to be conveyed, in the majority of cases, by the reading and interpretation of the Pitaka books.

The spirit in which bana is listened to may be

[1] *Buddhism*, p. 57.

gathered from the following paragraph, which represents the statement of an unquestionable authority :

'In the Kandian country the Brahmajala Sutta is often read, and the reading of it is always welcome. A great many people, men and women, flock together from all sides to the "bana-maduwa" (reading shed) in which this Sutta is to be read. This at first seems surprising, for the Brahmajala Sutta is a difficult and a long one. But herein lies the reason of its popularity. As to the difficulty, that is neither here nor there, for no one expects to understand much of any Sutra, but the fun lies in its *length.* The readers have to read very fast, for the fastest readers, beginning at 6 P.M., cannot finish much before half-past seven in the morning. And it is in witnessing their efforts that the pleasure consists. There are two readers who sit side by side (see p. 431). One reads the Pali original, and the other the Sinhalese commentary or translation. A stranger might expect to hear a paragraph, or at least a sentence of Pali, followed by its translation. But the exchange is kept up more briskly than this. Each word of Pali, as it is shouted by the one reader, is followed, with lightning speed, by its echo in Sinhalese from the other. 'Evaṁ,' shouts the one, 'thus' cries the other. 'Sutam' cries the first, 'heard' shouts his companion ;—and so on *all night.* 'It is exactly like a race,' says one who has often witnessed it, 'and the hearers are delighted. Every word carries "merit" with it, and amusement too.'

These pinkamas, as I have said, present the chief occasions on which the monks meet together in considerable numbers.

On poya days, *i.e.* at the four quarters, but especially at the first and third (new and full) of the moon, the monks go to temples (vihara) when laymen are making offerings, and after receiving the offering, preach in a more informal, and, I imagine, far more practical way than at the pinkamas. They take some Sutra or verse of it as a text, and preach upon it.

It is on the same poya days, generally after the gift-receiving and presenting, that confession by recitation of the Patimokkha (see p. 191) takes place. At such confessions are assembled only the monks from two or three neighbouring dwellings. From five to ten form a chapter in ordinary places: in the Malwatta as many as fifty may be collected. The form is gone through exactly as in the book (see p. 244). An elder, or any other who knows the Patimokkha by heart, recites it; the monks then by twos make their confession to one another. The assembly is thus taken to be 'pure.' The ceremony of reading the Patimokkha takes from two to three hours. The confession, I am told, is merely formal; no serious faults are ever confessed, at any rate, not unless already known. One who has been at many has told me that he never knew any bad thing voluntarily disclosed.

I am not aware that in this there is much de-

parture from the principle of the institution, as the books present it, for in them also there is no provision for the infliction of any penalties for offences made known at the confession. Such penalties are imposed by the Community (by sanghakamma) on other occasions, from information received outside the poya house, and after a formal accusation.

Besides attendance at these pinkamas and poya days, there are but few occasions on which the monks perform any ministerial rite, or act in any pastoral capacity. To weddings they do not go, either as guests or as ministers, nor do they recite any bana at weddings. On such occasions 'jayamangalagáthá,' stanzas expressing the hope that through certain acts and victories of the Buddha prosperity may result to the family, are recited, but by laymen.

At the opening of a new house, one or more monks, if and as invited, go and say 'árakshápiritta.' This consists of Ratana Sutta, Mangala Sutta, Karaniya Metta Sutta, which are called the three Suttas, and then perhaps Jayamangalagáthá. The words of the Ratana Sutta have had something to do with fostering the habit of calling on 'the gods' or 'God' for protection.

Similarly, when friends and relatives are collected on the day of a child's first eating rice, they invite as many monks as they can afford to feed, and the same pirit is recited. Some monks perform the part of astrologer, and make a horoscope for the new-born child; but this they do at home in the pansala.

On occasion of death they may go uninvited, and offer 'the consolations' of Buddhism. They read to the mourners certain Gathas, especially that beginning 'Tirokuddesu titthanti,' and the short formula, 'Anicca vata Sankhara' (this is so common as to be known and understood by most people).

At the interment, after the body is laid in the grave, wrapped in linen, another cloth is placed over it, and the monk takes hold of the corner of this cloth; and while another person pours water on the upper end of the corpse, the monk says 'Anicca vata Sankhara,' and then,

> 'Unnathe udakam vattam yathá ninnam pavassati
> Evam eva ito dinnam petánam upakappetu;'

that is, 'As water rolling down from higher ground flows over the lower land, so may that which is given in this world benefit the pretas' (or the departed). The custom of giving offerings to the dead lingers only to this slight extent, though it is recognised in the sacred books. The present theory about it is, that one cannot be sure the departed are not born as pretas, a sort of hungry 'ghoul;' and so it is safe to make this act on their behalf. Of course, according to Buddhism, no one who has once entered the 'first stage' (as a Sotapanno) can ever be born as a preta. But the anomaly is explained by saying that even the most meritorious may, for some small offence, have to be a preta for a week or so! This short purgatory is mitigated or prevented by the recitation.

In a few instances the bodies of laymen are burned; as in the case of a distinguished headman in the Kandy district a few years ago, to whose funeral rites some forty monks went: offerings, *i.e.* a dinner, were given to them during the day; at two o'clock the cremation took place.[1]

One of the most important features of the monastic life, in theory at least, is the observance of the retreat of the 'rainy season,' or 'was.' There is not in Ceylon a marked rainy season, as there is in North India; but the name of this custom still bears witness to the latitude in which it originated.

The observance of '*was*' at the present day in Ceylon may be more truly described as the monks' holiday than as 'the Buddhist Lent.' With Lent it has not, as far as I am aware, any single feature in common, except that it is a period of time set apart for a religious purpose. The period is three months, roughly coinciding with the months of European summer.

The essential part of the observance is, that the monk remains in one place or village all the time; or at any rate, may not be absent from it for more than seven days. The place may be either that of his own residence, or some other to which he is invited by laymen. The majority get an invitation. Those who are known to be able and learned, or who have

[1] While the proof of this page was in my hands for correction, my venerable teacher, Batuwantudáwé Pandit, died, and was cremated with great pomp in Colombo.

social influence, always get one ; and others, according to their merits. Some who are known to be ignorant or bad are never asked.

If a monk gets no invitation, he makes at the beginning of the period a resolution to pass it at home; and having made that resolution, he has no occasion to make any change whatever in his ordinary habits. In all these cases 'was' is virtually nothing.

But in the more desirable case, the order of things is this: the laymen of such and such a village determine, or such and such a rich 'donor' determines, to give an 'invitation' to two, or three, or twenty, or even more, monks. If the number he wants is small, he goes to the nearest pansala on a poya day and tells the monks that he proposes to receive such a number for 'was.' This is a month beforehand. The invitation is distributed in that pansala, or that and the neighbouring ones. If the number is large, the invitation is managed, as in the case of a pinkama, through one of the central monasteries or colleges. Such invitations, to rich villages or houses, are of course much desired, and 'wheels within wheels' are set in motion to secure them.

When the time comes the monks assemble at the place, and are received with more or less state. Rich 'donors' now-a-days decorate the roads and the approaches to the place, and the buildings are adorned with white cloths, and with the beautiful leaves and fruits of the country. Until of late, the accommodation provided for each monk was simple—'low beds

and seats,' and the other 'requisites,' were enough. But now the wealthy patrons pride themselves on giving to each monk a separate room, with 'chairs, tables, and wardrobes,' in European style.

During his stay, the monk is expected to read and explain the 'bana' books, and perhaps to 'preach' in a less formal way. The people on their part make much of him, and do their utmost to have it said, when he goes away, that he has been comfortably entertained.

On the occasions, and for the purposes above described, the monks meet together in more or less number. But these occasions are the exceptions. As a rule a monk is seen alone. If we meet at times a considerable number together, it is because they are travelling, probably to a pinkama. In their ordinary life they go abroad alone. In the street of a town, or among the narrow paths which lead, in Sinhalese villages, under the thick shade of cocoa-nut and jak trees, from one low house, in its clean-swept court-yard, to another, the yellow-robed figure moves, in grave and touching solitude. We see him standing, with down-cast eyes, holding his bowl with both hands before him, not putting the bowl forward nor uttering any sound to indicate his presence, nor by any look of impatience, or any movement, suggesting to a stranger the idea that he is waiting for anything. Such, at any rate, is the attitude and manner which the rules prescribe, and it is strictly conformed to by many, especially by the boy-monks, or novices, of whom

there are many. Sometimes, after he has stood thus, like the statue of patience, for some minutes, he moves on, quietly, and to all appearance contentedly, to the next house. There he may be more fortunate. He has been already seen, and the inmates are prepared for him. One of them, generally a woman,[1] brings out a ladle full of boiled rice, or of gruel, and pours it into his bowl, or lays in the bowl a few plantains, or a piece of fish,—a specimen, more or less liberally chosen, of whatever may be 'going' in the house. Having offered it, the woman, if she is a careful Buddhist, makes a low homage, or courtesy, herself sitting down and holding up the clasped hands above her head. In some cases (see p. 431) no notice whatever is taken of her respectful service, and the impassive visitor moves on to the next house; others, according to the sect, pronounce a short formula of blessing. It is not always that one sees any such respect exhibited. I have often observed a woman place her gift in the bowl with an air of utter indifference, if not contempt, turning away entirely without reverence. And sometimes a woman may be seen, especially in a fruit shop, where monks, of course, particularly expect to get something, picking out from her bunch of plantains, not the best nor yet the worst, but such as represents a due balance between thrift and religion. But this is not a temper peculiar to Buddhist donors;

[1] It was always, probably, chiefly by women that alms were put into the monk's begging bowl. It is curiously taken for granted that the giver will be a woman in Culla Vagga, viii. 5. 2.

in this matter at least 'one touch of nature makes the whole world kin.'

And of course the Buddhist monk does not go about his rounds day after day through the same street, or the same village, without knowing pretty well where he will be successful. It may be even suspected that he has means of conjecturing what is doing in the several kitchens, or at which meal there is salt fish with the rice!

In fact, of course, the provision for the village monk is systematically made in certain houses, while others bear a very slight or a very intermittent share of the responsibility. And this fact, that the monk as a rule walks straight to the place where he knows he will find his dinner, and then carries it home, must relieve the mendicant life of much of its hardship. It is simply a life in which one has not the trouble of keeping house.

These begging-rounds for food (pindapáta yanawá) take place in the morning, and the food has to be taken home and eaten before noon. In the afternoon, they go out—or one from each monastery, on behalf of all, goes out—to collect in the same way gifts of such things as are not to be eaten at once, condiments, tobacco, and the like, or other requisites for the monastery, and in particular, oil.[1]

[1] Obtaining requisites depends on reputation for consistency.—Ahankh. Sutta. *Sacred Books of the East*, xi. p. 211. To be respected, and so well-fed, is claimed as the lowest, but first, fruit of being a good monk in Sáman. Sutta. section 36, 37. Similarly, keeping well with laymen is given as the object with which a monk is to be recollected, etc., to perform the patisáraniya kammaṁ, —Culla Vagga, i. 20.

But in very poor districts, or in districts where Buddhism is not at all a power—and there are many such—the life of the mendicant is hard. Many monks know well what it is to be hungry, and some, I believe, turn their sufferings to spiritual account, bearing in mind the insignificance of the body, and trying to 'have treasure' elsewhere. And, what it surprised me at first to learn, the life is particularly hard in Colombo. Here only a proportion, probably not half, of the inhabitants are Buddhists at all, and of those, most are intent on getting, not giving, and parts of the town are harder to get a living in by begging than most of the villages. And young men who have come to Colombo—as poor students to a Scotch university—to attend the Pali College, have sometimes, if they have no friends in the city, a really hard life; and bear it, I am assured, in some instances, for the sake of learning, with an enthusiasm which is extremely touching.

Among the occupations of the monks within their monasteries we may reckon teaching, reading, and whatever other kinds of work are lawful; we might also, from the books, expect to hear of meditation, and of the exercises of those supernatural powers to which meditation is supposed to lead.

It may be questioned whether the rules of Buddha do strictly require monks to teach the young. I do not remember any passage in which it is enjoined. But public opinion seems always to have expected it; and the pansalas are said to have been of old the

chief if not the only schools of a nation which was certainly a cultivated one. Of late years in Ceylon, public opinion, which now-a-days has no respect for unproductive retirement, has demanded that the monks shall justify their existence and their large resources, by contributing effectively to the education of the people. It has begun to threaten that if the monks do not teach, their revenues shall be applied, either by government or by committees of their own, to that purpose. At present it is rare, and I believe it has always been rare, for a monastery to offer no teaching at all. One monk in each pansala is nominated by the senior to teach; and the village boys, ten or twelve of them perhaps, come to learn letters. The lessons go on from 7.30 or 8 A.M. to 8.30, and in the afternoon again from 4.30 to 6 P.M. No payment is ever made, nor is any pupil refused. The boys make themselves useful in the courtyard, the flower garden, and other small works about the monastery.

But besides these village boys, there are often 'novices,'—'little unnánsés,' as they are popularly called, —who live at the monastery to be prepared for the religious life. Lads are thus handed over to the care of the monks at seven or eight years old, though they are not admitted to 'pabbajja' till the age of ten or twelve. In some pansalas there may be four or five such pupils; but one or two is the usual number. They are under the care of the leading monk, who clothes, feeds, and teaches them, while they do the household work, fetch water and wood, cook, and so

on. However high their family, they submit to these menial tasks, and are taught to be proud of them. But they do not all go on to adopt the religious life. Out of boys who are thus intrusted to monks for education, only some twenty per cent. become monks, the rest are mostly lads of low caste who come virtually as servants, to learn their letters and to get fed. These boys generally leave at about fourteen or fifteen years of age, though even of them some—perhaps ten per cent.—stay till they are five-and twenty. They learn little beyond the alphabet and the Sattaka Paha. But to the 'novices' a good deal more is taught, as will appear presently.

As regards study on the part of the monks, it is obvious that there must be all degrees, from the ardent student or learned scholar, to the rough, coarse peasant who has neither interest in study nor capacity for it. But it may safely be said that anything that deserves the name of study is confined to very few, although the number of genuine students has been increased by the influence of the Pali Vidhyodaya College in Colombo. Few monasteries possess a complete copy of the Pitakas, but monks borrow from those which have them. Few leaf books are now written, for printing has almost superseded them. The Jataka book is a good deal read, not for morals or doctrine, but for amusement. Until of late this was the book most in use at twelve day pinkamas and the like, but since the revival of the study of Pali, Sutta Pitaka books are often read.

In the Kandian country at any rate, the Suttas most read are the Dhammacakkappavattana and Satipatthána Suttas; after these Kálakaráma Sutta (of Majjhima Nikaya), Subha Sutta, and Sigálováda Sutta. And for the rest, those to which there are Sannas, such as the Anguttara Nikaya and Majjhima Nikaya, are most in use. The Mahaparinibbana Sutta is not much read.

Many who are not students or Pali scholars at all can repeat by heart, without understanding, several of the Suttas which form 'Pirit' (see pp. 379 and 444), and which are taken chiefly from the Sutta Nipata.

No kind of manual work is done by monks, unless it be a little carpentering or painting, for ornament, about the pansala. Such work is considered to be strictly forbidden by Buddha. But medicine and astrology, which are also distinctly forbidden, are very much practised. Some of the best native doctors are monks, and of horoscopes they are the chief framers.[1]

As for meditation, in any regular form—sitting down for the purpose, etc.—it is absolutely unknown; such things, said one of my informants, 'are very non-existent.' He had never heard of any one even pretending to practise Samadhi, to use Kammatthana, etc.

Still less is there any pretence of, or expectation of supernatural powers (iddhi). The Ceylon Buddhists

[1] See both these expressly condemned, astrology with special emphasis, in Tevijja Sutta.—*Sacred Books of the East*, p. 196.

always laugh with utter incredulity at the stories of 'Esoteric Buddhism;' and say, 'perhaps there may be such things in Tibet.' In fact it is universally believed that the days are altogether past in which the higher walks of Buddhism were trodden. No one takes seriously the system of the 'paths,' in fact the terms are never heard. In actual life no one is ever heard to profess that he has entered even the first path (Sohan maga), or to express a wish to do so.

There are no 'rahats' now, nor have there been any for many centuries. It is said, indeed, that Buddha prophesied that within no very long time rahatship would be extinct.

At any rate, in later days, what could not but be admitted as a fact, was dignified with the character of a law. In the Commentary on the Abhidhamma Pitaka it is said, 'Rahatship will not be able to exist more than a century after the Nirvana of Buddha.'

There is in fact no reason to think that it was ever, in the Southern Buddhism at least, believed to be possible among contemporaries.[1] The pretence to supernatural powers is one of the things which make the more genuine Buddhists despise the 'Theosophists.' It is possible that under the influence of these foreigners the claim to a revival of *iddhi* may be put forward in Ceylon. If so it will be a spurious revival, and will be condemned by more intelligent

[1] In the Mahavansa it is never claimed. The expressions 'like a rahat,' 'it was as if there were rahats on earth,' show that there was no idea of it as a contemporary fact.—Mahavansa, ch. lxxxiv. etc.

Buddhists as an instance of the fourth Pacittiya offence, that of falsely pretending to supernatural attainments.

In short, there is little or no idea of even aiming at the standard of monastic life which the Vinaya Pitaka exhibits. In certain points the rule is observed, for instance in the ritual of admission, of full profession (upasampada), and of confession. But the substance of the rule is ignored, not only in technical details, but in almost all that concerns the practical object and the higher aims for which the Community professes to exist.

I have said above that boys are received into the Viharas to be taught and trained. Such of these boys as are of the proper caste and are satisfied with the life are 'admitted,' and are then under a particular tutor (or upádhyan wahanse), and are his pupils ('atawæsso'). They come chiefly from poor families of good rank, very few from among the rich.

The ceremony of 'admission' takes place in the monastery, its verandah, or any convenient place; in the presence, if possible, of the boys' parents and friends, to whom it is a great occasion.

First his hair is cut; then, if his parents can be present, he does homage to them, in sign that he asks their permission; then he does homage to his tutor and to other monks who may be present. He is then washed and ornamented with the complete clothing and ornaments of a layman. From the peculiar arrangement of the turban, which is put on so as to project like a cobra's hood, the lad so dressed and

ornamented is popularly called 'the cobra boy' (nágayá). His 'sumbare' or turban is put on in a peculiar fashion, supposed to have been always used on such an occasion from Buddha's time. The story is that a Naga or serpent prince named Divyanágarája, applied for admission to the Community. That could not be granted, but in reward for his piety, he was promised that every monk admitted should wear his mark. The novice is then placed before his tutor, the other monks sitting round, and makes obeisance to him, and sits in the posture of reverence, squatting a little on one side, and receives from his tutor the robe in which his tutor is to invest him. He then asks for admission 'for the sake of escaping sorrow, etc.' in words like those which we meet in the earliest Pitakas. The robes are then formally given to him, and the girdle is bound on his neck by the tutor, while the novice repeats the words called Taco pancake, viz.: Taco, naham, danta mamsam atthi, etc., the beginning of the list of the thirty-two foul and despicable elements of the body. He then retires and changes the rest of his lay dress for the yellow robes.

Then the ten precepts are 'given' to him, and this ends the ceremony.

He is then instructed, from six to eight or nine every evening, in the duties of a monk,—Herana sikha, Dinacariyawa, Satara Kamathan, Satara Sanvara sila, Sekhýawa,—which are the main parts of every novice's training. In communicating this know-

ledge the elder monks are said to spare no pains. But even before this, the principles of deportment (iriyapathá), how to walk, stand, sit, as becomes a monk, are taught by oral instruction and example. From his admission he is theoretically bound to live by mendicancy, and so the majority do; but some live on their property, buy rice with money, and so on; in fact, some send the novices to bring home food enough both for themselves and their elders. It is said that these boys are not idle, but—in the better cases—are kept hard at work by their tutors. According to the opinion and experience of one who has tried it in a poor Kandian village, it is a hard life, and the boy's spirits are only kept up by the assurance of his parents and teachers that it is a noble life, and well worth the suffering. From the poverty of the people, and their less attachment to Buddhism, the life of monks in the Kandian country is harder than in the low country; but Colombo, on account of ridicule, disrespect, and the like, is harder still. But some of these lads, like my informant, are sustained by a genuine desire for learning. The monks, however, of some of the Kandian monasteries are so well off as not to depend on the 'alms' of 'the faithful;' and hence they are without the stimulus which their low-country brethren have to a life at least outwardly conformable to their profession. The places where the influences are bad are known, and avoided; but on the whole the lives of two-thirds are bad. More than one whom I have

asked has told me that he knows personally three or four places in the Kandian country where theft and forgery go on, and supposes there are ever so many more. Very few monks are chaste; many go to women in villages; very many are guilty of nameless vices. In the Vidyodhya College, the influence of Sumangala, and of Heyantuduwe (from a Cotta village) is powerful for good; and the lads while at the college for the most part live well, but most return to their bad lives when they get back to their 'pansalas.'

CHAPTER XXXI

PRESENT CUSTOMS AND CONDUCT OF THE BUDDHIST LAITY IN CEYLON

IN attempting to describe the present form and influence of Buddhism in Ceylon among the 'laity,' I am met by two great difficulties. One of them is the difficulty which would attend such an attempt under any circumstances on the part of a writer who lived among those whose religion he was to describe. Such a writer cannot be content with mere hearsay or mere generalities; the matter is real and near to him, and presents itself to his mind in details and in instances. On the other hand, he distrusts his instances and his own impressions, and knows the more thoroughly, the longer he has lived among a people, how little a foreigner can see into their life, how far they are from being all alike, how easily any statement in one direction may be met by contradicting instances. Further, he has personal relations with those of whom he is to write, and feels that every unfavourable feature in his picture may arouse resentment, or give pain to people whom he esteems and desires to please. To this difficulty I

shall so far yield as to be much briefer and less decisive in this part of my subject than its importance would suggest. To describe with unhesitating decision the value of a religious system, or the character of an Eastern people, must remain the prerogative of the passing tourist.

The other difficulty is one peculiar to the circumstances of this case, and arises from what is, as I think, the most interesting fact connected with the subject. There are two Buddhisms now in Ceylon: the residuum of the old Buddhism of the past centuries, as it lingers in out-of-the-way places, and as it has shaped the habits and ways of thought of those who are not under European influence; and a new revival, much more self-conscious and artificial, which aims indeed only at reviving what Buddhism always professed to be, but which has been influenced, in its estimate of that profession, very largely by Europeans. It is easy to distinguish these two Buddhisms in their extremes.

Travelling through the less frequented parts of the Kandian Provinces, where the hills begin to rise out of the low country, one may ask a peasant what his religion is. He will reply, 'We are Buddhists,' but will be surprised at its being expected that he should know anything more of religion than that there is a Bo-tree in such and such a part of the village, before which people lay a few yellow flowers from time to time; he does not know why, but it is the custom. There is a temple with a

dagaba a little way off; he has been there now and then, but has no interest in it whatever: the monk who lives there is a man not much respected, but to whom it is the custom to give food when he comes round. He may have taught a few boys their letters; but no one ever heard of his teaching religion to any one, though our informant supposes he says 'bana' in his own way. We ask whether the monk does any good in the place; and the answer is, 'No. Why should he?'

We go on to the 'temple,' which is half-way up the richly wooded rocky hill that rises near the village. A path little trodden leads us through the dense jungle, where almost every tree is rich with its own blossom, colourless, perhaps, but fragrant, till we climb, with here and there a rude step cut, over steep but rounded surfaces of dark grey stone, between great overhanging boulders, in every cleft of which the wild fig clings; past here and there a narrow cistern for rain-water made long ago by enlarging a fissure of the gneiss rock. At last signs appear of a path more cleared, and a bit of fence, and a few flowers; and one or two cocoa-nuts, rare at that distance from the sea, stand near a low-roofed hut that nestles close under a vertical face of rock. A yellow robe hangs over the little railing, which encloses a tiny square of well-swept gravel. In this square stand the hut or pansala, the three cocoa-nut trees, and the dagaba, a grey ruined dome, some twelve feet high, on its crumbling base of old hewn stone.

A yellow-robed lad comes out and stares at us, and goes away, and soon brings out the old man, whose thin dreary face gains a kind of dignity from the shaven head, which in the boy only adds to the stupidity of his look. The old monk is singularly courteous, and soon insists on sending for a young cocoa-nut for us—perhaps the only one on his trees—and on cutting the end of it with his razor, which he politely assures us can easily be sharpened again. He is pleased by our admiring the place; but except that it is very old, he has nothing to tell us about it, nor can anything whatever, in an intellectual sense, be got out of him. He shows us with some pride his two or three books, of only a few leaves each, brown with age and smoke, which he can read but cannot understand. They are Pali, he says; but will commit himself no further.

Of the temple or vihara, he would apparently not have thought, unless we had asked him where it was and whether we might see it. 'You can,' he says indifferently, and leads us along a little path, on the inner side of the enclosure, over which the rock, which behind his dwelling was vertical, leans more and more forward. We come to a little platform of swept gravel, completely overhung by the cliff, against which a low penthouse has been built. A rough narrow door, with a massive lintel of timber, is opened with a key, and we enter a sort of wide but very shallow cave. Nearly in front of us we see a few small figures of Buddha, a brass lamp or two, and an

oily little slab of stone, on which some flowers, without leaf or stalk, have been laid; and as our eyes grow accustomed to the dim light, we become aware that the cave extends to some distance on our left; and that up against the rock-wall, partly hewn in the stone, and partly built up of brick and stucco, is what was once a recumbent figure of Buddha. 'Very ancient,' says our guide; but he shows no respect for it whatever.

We are glad to get out from the smell of bats and of burnt gums and camphor, and to notice above our heads the drip-course, a shallow incision cut in the rock high up over the whole length of the cave building, to throw off the rain that may run down the surface before it can reach the penthouse roof. Close to this mark of ancient care, we notice a line of letters, unlike the Sinhalese of the present day, and nearly similar to those in which Asoka had his edicts written twenty-one centuries ago. 'Very old,' says the monk, and adds with pride that the government agent once brought a gentleman who read and copied them. They seem, so far as they are legible, merely to record that this cave was given to the Community by some king, the Tissa or Abhaya of his day.

By the time we come away, several villagers may have gathered about us, and we learn from them that to the temple we have visited some of the best of the neighbouring fields belong, and that the old monk is supposed to receive a fair return from them. But as far as religion goes he seems to be scarcely more to

them than to us—a familiar figure among the immemorial elements of their tiny world.

But if we can lead them to talk of their crops, and houses and illnesses, and of the births and deaths that have occurred in their memory, we shall find that we are in a world of demons, who give trouble and must be driven away, who are sometimes seen with fatal consequences in the jungle,—a world in which tribute must be paid to the goddess of disease, and to the far away deity of Kattragama; in which scarcely anything happens by direct human or natural agency, but all by virtue of charms and omens. The old monk up there casts horoscopes, it is true; but for all practical purposes a 'Kapurála'—an exorcist or devil-priest in the next village—is the pastor of the flock. The whole home life is haunted by a sort of religion, but Buddhism is almost as completely outside it as the British Government.

That is one extreme. Return to Colombo, and go into the Oriental Library at the Museum, and you will see yellow-robed students at work with pen and note-book on Pali manuscripts in Sinhalese or Burmese characters; they are students at the Buddhist College. On the table you may find a copy of *The Buddhist*, an English newspaper as modern in tone as the *Daily News*; full of reports of Buddhist schools, meetings, and lists of subscriptions, cremations, and conversions, mingled here and there with a paragraph of abuse of Christianity. If it is the 'Birthday of our Lord Buddha,' you will find decorations and lamps

in half the streets of the city, and meet gay processions and hear 'carols' half the night. In the prison you may find a monk preaching to the criminals, or in a hospital visiting the sick; or you will see him holding forth at the corner of the street, exactly imitating, while he denounces, the Christian missionary.

What is clearly fabulous or superstitious in the old system is boldly thrown overboard, and Buddhism claims to be in alliance with modern discoveries and the philosophy of the West. New dagabas are being built, and old ones being repaired,—books and tracts being printed. The reform of abuses and improvement of the lives of the 'priests' are loudly called for: the Buddhist 'schoolmaster is abroad.'

Such are the two Buddhisms in the extreme of their divergence. And the questions so difficult to answer are: Is the new of one piece with the old, a true revival of an old stock, or is it a foreign importation which may replace but cannot revive what went before? And if the answer to this question lies between these alternatives, to what extent has this revival, loud and well advertised as it is, touched the national heart? Is it entirely or nearly coextensive with European civilisation and the English language? or is it working along purely native channels, and finding a genuine response in native instincts?

Such questions are very difficult to answer, because between the two extremes which I have contrasted there is every intermediate shade.

It is certainly the case that the external and artificial revival has affected not Colombo only, or the Anglicised districts, but the purely native provinces, in at least two ways; by the diffusion of education among monks, and by the restoration of ancient shrines.

Since European students incited the Sinhalese to the study of their own 'sacred books,' even in remote villages Suttas are being read and expounded, which, because there was no Sinhalese translation, had not been heard there for centuries. Monks who have some knowledge of the religion they profess, beyond that which suffices for receiving food and seeing the court of the pansala swept, are being sent out in every direction; are living better lives, I believe, and gaining a different kind of respect from that which was paid to their predecessors.

The restored dagabas—though their restoration is due, as at Anuradhapura, to European antiquarian interest, or, as at Tissa Maharama, to English irrigation works,—are yet attracting pilgrims and promoting an interest in Buddhism, in the remote districts in which they are. Even the obscure and unhealthy Alut Nuwara, its old dagaba being restored, has lately attracted multitudes, who have carried back to their villages not cholera only but, we may suppose, an increased devotion.

These are both ways in which the educational movement is affecting the general standard, though by an artificial and perhaps temporary effort. But

there are directions in which we may see, I think, increased zeal stimulated by the same causes, but moving more distinctly on the old lines. In some of those places within the maritime provinces, in which Buddhism has for a long time had a strong footing, the new movement has sufficed to develop it. 'Donors' are more numerous, and are doing no new thing but the old on a larger scale, giving to monks in large assemblies, building dagabas, and providing for festivals. One may see along the roads of the southern province twenty monks together, proceeding with some dignity, with very handsome fans and new silk umbrellas, with bowls neatly covered with yellow cloth and carried by boys well dressed in white, to the place of entertainment. And for miles one may meet companies of gaily dressed people, women especially, but by no means exclusively, streaming along, cheerful and well-behaved, towards shrines which a few years ago attracted not a tenth of the number. Near such a shrine itself, may be seen a hundred or more women, all in white, each carrying in her uplifted hand a piece of the fragrant areca flower, shouting 'Sádhu' from time to time as they march along, and at any rate enjoying the exhilarating sense of procession.

Such a scene strikes one, at first sight at least, as the genuine development of a genuine native custom. On the other hand, one knows that at the back of all this there are subscriptions, raised often by foreigners,

and if not by foreigners, by representatives of the Colombo school of reformers. The result may be more artificial than at first appears. It may be, after all, the fruits of a mission from Colombo.

In Colombo itself there are scarcely any Buddhist institutions that are not new. European passengers often ask to see 'a temple,' and for want of any better temple in the town they are taken to one at Kotahena. It is only within the last thiry years that this has been heard of. There was a 'pansala' there, but no Vihara, till one was erected and named (it was completed nearly ten years ago) by the energetic controversalist Mohottiwatte. This man never rose, I believe, to be more than a 'novice' (samanera); but he made himself a considerable name, and his cremation, early in 1891, was the occasion of a very large, though not a spontaneous, 'demonstration.' He started a printing press, from which a great many tracts against Christianity have issued, and some periodicals. I am told that he erected near the gate of his temple a statue of himself.

Those visitors who think that when they are taken to this place they are visiting a genuine centre of Buddhism are much mistaken. I am assured that it is not visited by as many as twenty people a day, and that most of those are 'passengers'!

What the leaders of the modern school wish the Buddhists of Ceylon now to practise and believe, can be very clearly ascertained from their published manuals; though it is not easy to say whether these books

represent a new departure, or continue the tradition of the past. In this respect there is probably a wide interval between the two little works of which I am now to speak.

The first is a little manual in Sinhalese called *Buddha-Faith*, issued from the Kotahena temple, of the Amarapura sect, some twenty years ago. It is largely used at any rate in the low country. Most Buddhists who can read, at least in and near Colombo, possess a copy; and some of those who cannot read, get it read to them. It contains the rules for 'Taking Refuge in Buddha,' etc.; for 'taking'—as it is called—or binding one's self to, the Five, the Eight, or the Ten Precepts: for the observance of 'poya' (uposatha) days, and for meditation on decay, etc.; with short explanations of the doctrine of Karma, and of merit and demerit; and of duties towards the dead, towards the gods, and towards the relics of the Buddha.

An abstract of some of its contents will show the character of its teaching.

The obligation of the Five Precepts, being universal, may be 'taken' either at home, every day, or less frequently; or it may be more formally taken in the presence of a monk at a temple. In this case, the person first offers flowers at the temple; he then kneels or prostrates himself before the monk with hands joined together, says three times, 'Homage to the Buddha,' etc.; three times, 'I take refuge,' etc.; and then he repeats after the monk the five pre-

cepts (or prohibitions). If he has not time to go to a temple, he can 'take sil' before any image of Buddha, or turning himself in the direction in which there is a temple or an image, etc. This is the *minimum* of Buddhist observance; it is observed by the large majority of Buddhists in the more civilised parts of the country, especially in the maritime districts; in the Kandian districts comparatively few do even this; and in the outlying jungle districts it is almost unknown. In such parts the people have, as nearly as possible, no religion.

Taking the 'Eight Precepts,' or 'atasil,' is more serious. It can only be done before a monk, and on a poya day; the person rises and must be fasting, and dressed in a white cloth; and on that day he may not eat after noon. Besides the formulas of 'homage' and 'refuge,' he has to repeat certain stanzas. This is the regular way of observing the poya day, and those who do it are considered regular or devout to a certain extent: they are 'upasakas' of the lower grade. It is often extended to longer periods; sometimes the obligation is renewed continually.

The devotee of the Ten Obligations, or 'dasa sil upasaka,' is almost a monk. He is as much bound for life as the monk is, wears a special dress and shaves his head, and is to undertake no other work than meditation, visiting temples, and giving or doing works of mercy. But he may live in a house, though

he must occupy a separate room. He renews his vow every poya day.

This is the upasaka *par excellence.* There are very few men of this profession; but a considerable number of such women, generally old, are to be seen about the temples, especially in Kandy, or on the way to Adam's Peak. They usually carry bowls as if for begging, and their shaven heads and dirty white dresses give them a pathetic aspect; and one who had read the books would naturally suppose them to be nuns. Female mendicants they are; but they have not been admitted to a Community, and therefore are not called 'bhikkhunis,' but only 'upasikas.'

The poya days are four in each lunar month, at the four quarters, and are made known by a special almanac called the 'Pancanga lita.' They are said to be every seventh day; but this, of course, is not strictly the case: if it were, the days would not correspond with the phases of the moon. Nor do they occur, of course, on any particular day of the week. The full moon is much the most observed, and the new moon next; the other two are not recognised except by upasakas.

Nor are the poya days fast days in any other sense than this, that the 'atasil upasaka' may not eat on those days after noon, or after (the turn of the sun towards) sunset. There is no such thing in Buddhism, either primitive or modern (in Ceylon), as a day on which all eating is forbidden, or on which any

degree of abstinence is enjoined on all Buddhists. The word uposatha, borrowed from Brahmanism, meant a day of abstinence; but as adopted by Buddhism it means a day for special observances, some of which are accompanied by abstinence for various periods from food, and also from luxuries and amusements.

As regards work, there is no rule forbidding it on the poya day; but upasakas keep away from work, to give themselves to religious occupations; in many cases they shut themselves up altogether. The fact that Buddhist fishermen often refuse to go out on poya days, leads Europeans to think that work is forbidden; but it is not the work so much as the taking of life which they avoid.

For it is taught that all the merit of 'taking' the Five Obligations is destroyed by breaking one of them that day; and it is popularly believed also that on poya days Sakra, the chief of the gods who are concerned with human affairs, comes down specially to see who are keeping the precepts. Merit is acquired by offerings, by keeping precepts, and by active works of charity; is forfeited—according to the 'Buddha-œdahilla'—not only by breaking the precepts but by thinking any god greater than Buddha, or by turning Buddhist for the sake of pleasing any god. It is also taught, much to the credit of modern Buddhism, that demerit is incurred by *not doing acts of kindness* or by omitting alms-giving.

The manual goes on to explain how the merit of

a man's acts can be imparted (*a*) to departed friends (*b*) to the gods.[1]

The Manual contains stanzas used in worshipping dagabas (relic-shrines) and in offering flowers; and some of the more popular Suttas, viz.:—Mangala, Ratana, Karaniyametta; and certain Jayamangala gatha, or stanzas for good luck and prosperity. The latter recite certain actions of the Buddha, and each stanza ends with the refrain, 'By virtue of this may your prosperity grow.' It has been said that these verses are not directly religious; but the use of them implies a belief in the Buddha, and their purpose is to obtain for the person congratulated some sort of benefit from the Buddha. It is said that they were once used in welcoming the Christian Governor of Ceylon; but they are no longer admitted on such occasions.

A more recent manual, published in English, called *A Buddhist Catechism*, was issued in 1881 for use in Buddhist Schools, and bears the *imprimatur* of the learned Sumangala, Principal of the Pali College in Colombo, and 'High Priest' of Adam's Peak.

It consists mainly of the recitation of the principal points in the received biography of Gotama, in a form a little more ornate than that which has been above

[1] The following gatha is used for giving merits to the departed friends or relations:—

Etan mé ñátínañ hotu
Sukhitá hontu ñatayo. (Repeated thrice).

The gatha used for giving merits to the gods is:—

Akásatthác a bhumatthá
Dévá nágá mahiddhiká
Puññantan anumóditwá
Ciran rakkhantu man sadá.

given from the Pitakas; including the four signs which preceded his leaving home, and the supernatural circumstances which accompanied it, and laying more stress on this renunciation than I have found laid on it in the books. With this biography is a very favourable and not unfair statement—though in language, of course, coloured by Christian associations—of the Buddhist morality, and short, and I should say, unsatisfactory statements on the rest of the system. It concludes with the received legends of the Councils, of Asoka, and of Mahinda's mission to Ceylon. Its view of Buddhism differs from the system as I have intended to represent it only in a few details;—the most important, I think, being the statement about the human nature of Gotama. To the question, 'Was Gotama a man?' the answer is, 'In form a man; but internally not like other men.' The suggestion that Gotama was in any sense not a true man is, I think, quite contrary to the ancient teaching.

In reference to morals, the following may be noted:—

'The broad rule is, that if we have an excess of merit we will be well and happily born the next time; if an excess of demerit, our next birth will be wretched and full of suffering.'

The whole religion of the Buddha is said to be summed up in the verse thus translated:

> 'To cease from all sin,
> To get virtue.
> To cleanse one's own heart,
> This is the religion of the Buddhas.'

The following are of a very modern colour:—

Q. 'Do Buddhists consider Buddha as one who by his own virtue can save us from the consequences of our individual sins?

A. 'Not at all. No man can be saved by another; he must save himself.

Q. 'What, then, was Buddha to us and all other beings?

A. 'An all-seeing, all-wise counsellor; one who discovered the safe path and pointed it out; one who showed the cause of, and the only cure for, human suffering. In pointing to the road, in showing us how to escape dangers, he became our Guide. And as one leading a blind man across a narrow bridge, over a swift and deep stream, saves his life, so in showing us, who were blind[1] from ignorance, the way to salvation, Buddha may well be called our "Saviour."'

But there is not much that is controversial. A personal God is expressly denied, and creation said (somewhat more cautiously) to be inconceivable. 'Soul' is said to be 'a word used by the ignorant to express a false idea.' Nirvana is said to be the total obliteration of everything that goes to make up the physical man; and the Parinibbana of Gotama is called 'the death of his body.'

The support of modern science is claimed for Buddhism, inasmuch as the doctrine of the development of the Bodhisats, some slower, some quicker,

[1] This doctrine, in the form here appealed to, is not found in the Pitakas.

is substantially in agreement with the theory of evolution. An intelligent student of this Catechism will hardly escape the difficulty, which is inherent in the whole system as it now practically exists,—the difficulty of reconciling its claim to be scientific with its tolerance of superstition and virtual polytheism. In one sentence, the supernatural is denied; in the next, 'phenomena-working power' is said to be obtainable by drugs and charms. On the next page, we are told that Buddhists 'believe there are such beings as "devas," which inhabit worlds or spheres of their own: that they are of three kinds; and that 'some have power to torment the impure.'

It is not clear whether these 'beliefs' are among the things of which it is said, 'the poetical imagination, zeal, or lingering superstitions of Buddhist devotees, in various ages, have no doubt caused the noble principles of Buddha's moral doctrines to be coupled more or less with what might be removed to advantage.' Certainly if, with these, the belief in planets, charms, and devil-dances can be 'removed,' Christians, at any rate—and surely all good Buddhists—will rejoice.

I am far from wishing—I trust it has been clear throughout this book—to make the worst of Buddhism. I wish Buddhism would make the best of itself. At present it is inconsistent, just where inconsistency does most harm.

'A personal god,' says the *Buddhist Catechism*, 'Buddhists regard as only a gigantic shadow thrown

upon the void of space by the imagination of ignorant men.' The Buddhist belief is in reality both better and worse than this creed.

A Buddhist mother calls her child, 'the child that God has given' her; a Buddhist says to his friend, 'God preserve you!'; in extreme distress Buddhists say, 'Are there no gods?' And when the modern revival demands that 'Buddha's birthday' should be kept, the motto is constantly exhibited on Colombo walls, 'God bless our Lord Buddha!'

To what extent in each instance the thought in the mind is the idea of a single Supreme God, it is difficult to say. The word used is generally the honorific plural, a grammatical form which is generally, if not uniformly, singular in meaning; but it is possible that it often covers a vague idea, neither definitely singular nor definitely plural. But that the idea is personal there can be no doubt whatever. The living Buddhist does, as a fact, believe in personal deity; and herein his belief is better than his creed.

But the *Buddhist Catechism*, while it denies what human nature insists on believing, goes on to teach as follows:—'Buddhists believe that there are such beings (as devas) which inhabit worlds, or spheres of their own.' These are certainly thought of as personal. One of the kinds is still subject to passions, and some can torment the impure. Popular belief goes further, and peoples every wood with personal beings, devatas and demons; identifies every planet

with a presiding 'grahayá;' goes to Hinduism for the personal guardians of house and crop, and the personal wielders of luck and pestilence; goes to the basest sorcery for the personal agents of malice and revenge. Here the belief is worse than the creed.

Now I should like to challenge the scientific Buddhist, who thinks himself compelled by science to deny God, openly to deny and denounce and repudiate on the part of Buddhism—I will not say the devas, who open gates to Buddhas, or the Sakra who looks after poya days, but—at least the devils, Pattinis, Hanumans, and the rest of the more malignant 'shadows thrown on the void of space by the imagination of ignorant men.'

When I condemn these, am I condemning Buddhism?

I have come to the point at which, with all respect for the aims of those who are now, from among the Buddhists themselves, trying to promote what is good by means of Buddhism, I must offer some estimate of the result which, so far as I can learn, Buddhism has effected in Ceylon for virtue.

The estimate, unhappily, cannot be a high one.

If it is asked, to begin with, whether the Sinhalese are evidently and unmistakably influenced in their lives by the religion which they profess, as Mohammedans for instance are, the answer must be, No; except in the matter of scrupulousness about taking the life of animals. In other matters, whether a

man's conduct were good or bad, he would seldom allege religion as his motive. Religion is a matter of obtaining merit by certain offerings and attendances; not, in ordinary cases, a matter of conduct.

I have taken a good deal of pains to ascertain whether there were men popularly esteemed for their exemplary conduct, and what the instances of that conduct were. Large instances of giving, I have met with; such and such a Sinhalese lady had been a great promoter of building dagabas; another had got the whole Jataka book copied out in a day; but of conduct founded on religious principle I have heard very little. A long questioning, of a fairly intelligent man, led me only to the case of a monk who would not allow the conductor of a coach to carry a parcel for him illegally, but insisted on paying for it! Especial inquiries as to the conduct of upasakas, whether they are particularly good husbands, friends, etc., have led only to negative results. I attribute this less to the want of exemplary religious characters than to the want of any idea that religiousness was to be tested by conduct in ordinary life.

On the other hand, I have found a low standard of conduct acquiesced in as proper to Buddhists as compared with Christians. Instead of the Christian claim, which, whether well founded or not, is constantly made, 'You can trust me: for I am a Catholic;' I have often heard something like this, 'What can you expect of me? I am only a Buddhist.' It is not expected of an ordinary Buddhist that he

will aim high: if he is an upasaka, it is only expected that he will be morose and proud.

I am painfully aware, as I write this, how little Christian conduct often corresponds to Christian standard; but, at any rate, 'Christian behaviour' means —in all lips—'good behaviour;' I suppose no one ever heard a Sinhalese use 'Buddhist conduct' as a synonym for 'good conduct.'

The lowness of the standard, even in the matters on which in theory emphasis is laid, is painfully shown by surprise at an ordinary moral action. An Englishman, driving out from Colombo towards a town some twenty miles distant, came up with a little crowd round a woman who had been knocked down by a bullock. As any Englishman would have done, he put her in his carriage, with one or two of her companions to support her, and had her taken slowly towards her home, which was a mile further on, himself following on foot. He was shocked by hearing one of the women say, 'This must be a god; no man would do this!' A day or two afterwards he returned, and went a little out of his way to ask after her. He heard his conduct discussed as he drew near the place by many people with extravagant admiration; and the expression oftenest repeated was, 'No Sinhalese man would have done this!' In case of an accident, it is often impossible to persuade a bystander to help. A man may lie by the roadside and entreat passer-by after passer-by to help him out of the sun into the shade, and not one will stop.

While using sober argument in the proper place, abstain from all abuse of the faith of others.

Admit that the doctrines of a Creator and Rewarder, of a Saviour from sin, of a Helper in the road to Holiness, of an immortal Life, are doctrines characteristic of Christianity.

APPENDIX

THE SIRIVAḌḌHANAPURA OF MAHÁVAṆSA, CH. LXXXV.

KANDY having been known in later times as Sirivaḍḍhanapura—or, in the more usual Sanscrit form, Sirivardhana—the mistake was not an unnatural one, which found in Kandy the Sirivaḍḍhana of Parakrama II. That it was a mistake was known to a few scholars, but the facts which put the truth in a clear light have only very recently been brought together.

The facts are these: Sirivardhana, 'auspicious and prosperous,' is more an epithet than a name, and is given in Sinhalese books to many places, Kurnnegala and Yahapaw, for instance, as well as to Parakrama's birthplace and to Kandy. The original name of Kandy seems to have been Senkhaṇḍasela, or the Sinhalese of which that is the Pali form. By this name, with Sirivaḍḍhana added, Kandy is called when it is first mentioned in the Mahavansa (chap. xcii.); but afterwards its proper name is dropped, in favour of the auspicious epithet. The birthplace of Parakrama, to which he gave the title, was a place previously and afterwards insignificant, close to the royal city Dambadeniya, in the low-land between Kandy and the sea. Its proper name was probably Nanbambaraya.

How long ago the inhabitants of Kandy began to claim this honour for their own, I cannot tell; but at any rate, about 1833, those who supplied Sir Alexander Johnstone with the books which were placed for editing in Mr. Upham's hands, must have told Mr. Upham that this Sirivardhana was Kandy. For in that author's English of the 'Rájaratnácari,' after the words, 'the king built the city called Sreewardanam Poora,' the words, 'now called Candy,' are boldly inserted, without a hint that they are not in the original (Upham, ii. 104). Neither in the 'Rájaratnácari (a Sinhalese history completed in the sixteenth century, and largely founded on the 'Mahavansa'), nor in the 'Rájavaliya' (which was written a century

or more later, and also follows the 'Mahavansa' closely in this part) is there anything to point to the identification with Kandy.

Turnour, writing a few years later than Upham, placed no confidence in the latter's work, and so escaped the mistake. He does not expressly contradict it, nor does he attempt any other identification; he simply says, 'Sirivaḍḍhanapura in the Seven Korles.'

Sir Emerson Tennent (i. 414) was more easily misled. Referring to Upham (*l. c.*), but probably supported also by the popular opinion in Ceylon, he published to the world the identification of Kandy with the birthplace of Parakrama the second. Knighton, in 1845, and others had already repeated the received opinion, but it was Tennent's popularity and authority that did most to establish it.

The next step is a curious one. In January 1877, the learned Sumangala Terunnanse and the late Batuwantudávé Pandit published their Sinhalese translation of the 'Mahavansa.' Into their text, in the passage which states the distance of Sirivaḍḍhana from Dambadeṇiya, there crept, I know not how, the erroneous reading 'eight yoduns' (ninety-six miles) instead of 'half-a-yodun' (six miles). The Pali for 'eight' is 'aṭṭha,' and that for 'half' is 'aḍḍha,' and the characters are very much alike, but the error is the more surprising from the fact that the translators had already published a Pali text with the other reading, 'aḍḍha.'

It is to be attributed, I suppose, to this oversight that when the learned C. Vijésinhe came to make his English version, he followed the same reading, and removed the place ninety-seven miles, instead of seven, from Dambadeṇiya. At the same time, by rendering the word 'atule' as 'incomparable *for its scenery*,' Mr. Vijésinhe further favoured the identification with Kandy.

The truth seemed now in a fair way to be for ever lost sight of, at least by all who should form their opinions from published works and not from direct study of original authorities.

But happily there were still in Ceylon students of the latter class, and among them Mr. K. J. Pohath, Mr. D. M. de Zilva Wickremesinghe, Native Assistant to the Archæological Commission, Velivitiye Dhammaratana Terunnanse (who has kindly helped me with his opinion), and Mr. W. Goonetilleke, the Editor of the *Orientalist*.

Mr. Pohat communicated to the *Orientalist* (vol. iii. p. 218) a note to the following effect: 'Sir Emerson Tennent has made a serious mistake when he says in his *History of Ceylon* (vol. i.

p. 414) that King Paṇḍita Parákrama Báhu (erroneously called by him "Prakrama Báhu") III. "founded the city of Kandy then called Siri-vardana-pura." The truth is, that this king never built a city called "Sirivardanapura," much less the city of Kandy. It was to a city in Hat-korale (Seven Korles) called Sirivardanapura, in the neighbourhood of Dambadeṇiya, that Paṇḍita Parákrama Báhu III. (II?) removed the Daladá-relic,' etc. Mr. Pohath went on to mention some of the authors who had fallen into the mistake.

This note attracted little attention in Ceylon, but it was seen and accepted by Professor Rhys Davids, who adopted Mr. Pohath's statement in an 'addendum' to vol. xxx. of *Sacred Books of the East.*'

It was by Professor Davids' 'addendum' that my own attention was drawn to the matter, after I had adopted the mistake in the first draft of my twenty-seventh chapter. I consulted Mr. W. Goonetilleke, to whom also the question was then new. His inquiries about the MSS. of the Mahavansa showed that 'aḍḍha' and not 'aṭṭha,' 'half' and not 'light,' was the true reading. He pointed out also that the Tooth was stated, after having been placed at Sirivaḍḍhanapura, to have been carried to Pulaṭṭhi, not from any other neighbourhood, but from Dambadeniya. His arguments, based on a careful study of the Mahavansa itself, convinced the learned Sumangala that Mr. Pohath was right.

The argument was carried further by Mr. Wickremesinghe, who, with Velivitiye Terunnanse, had long before this convinced himself that the place was to be sought near Dambadeniya, and had succeeded, as I think, in identifying it still more exactly. The following are the proofs which he has been good enough to communicate to me:—

'The Sirivaḍḍhana, which we are discussing, was confessedly the birthplace of Parákrama, the son of Vijaya Báhu. Now, while several books ("Daladápújávaliya," "Vanne Rájavaliya," and "Dambadeṇi-asna") say that Vijaya Báhu lived at Paḷábatgala, in Seven Korles (a place not identified), the Dambadeṇi-asna says that Parákrama, his son, lived at a place called (and still known as) Nanbambaraya; and that from that place he made a procession-path, two "gows," or about eight miles long. The Vanné Rájavaliya also mentions this procession-path. Nanbambaraya is about this distance from Dambadeṇiya.'

But Mr. Wickremesinghe has got nearer than this. He dis-

covered some three years ago at Dambadeṇiya part of an old poem called 'Kalundápaṭuna,' and in this he finds it recorded that when Parakrama II. was called to the kingdom he was superintending the cultivation of *his fields at Nanbambaraya, where he had his palace.* This then was, in all probability, his native place, the place which he would delight to honour. It would be no wonder if he gave to it, when it became the royal abode, the royal and auspicious title.

But even here Mr. Wickremesinghe does not leave us to conjecture, for the same passage of the 'Kalundápaṭuna' says, that Nanbambaraya was adorned not only by the king's palace but by his queen, Sirivardhana Bisava, 'Queen Sirivardhana.'

Thus not only is the place, with the highest degree of probability, identified, but a romantic light is thrown upon its origin; while the king's selection of it for honour, and the enthusiasm with which his historian describes it, are abundantly explained. We know not which more to admire, the faithfulness of our ancient historian or the ingenuity of his modern interpreters.

Since this note was written, Mr. H. Parker, a very careful archæologist, has announced, in the *Ceylon Literary Register*, that he possesses ample and conclusive information about Sirivardhanapura. Whether it will confirm the results above set forth or not remains to be seen.

July 14, 1892.

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